

2010 January

R. Brooks Stover earns Master Model Railroader 428.

Chuck Davis earns Master Model Railroader 425.



Ceandic Crew setting up the layout for the NMRA Regional OpSig RockyOp 2009. The Crew left to right: Rodney Black, Kent Charles, Travis Searls, Dan Delany (foreground), Bob Hochstetter (rear), Fred Jaeger, Andrew Black, and Dean Dickerhoof. (Published January 2010)

Australasian Region 25th anniversary convention



President's Car

This month I'm turning over my space to Charlie Getz, our North America Director At Large, for a report on The Australasian Region's 25th Anniversary convention, held recently in Sydney.

NMRA President Mike Brestel

In October 2009, I was honored to attend the 25th Anniversary Convention of the Australasian Region in Sydney, Australia, along with my wife Margaret, NMRA Vice President Allen Pollock, good friend Jim Lumpfer ("Lumpy" as he is known in Florida), and noted author and Board of Director member Tony Koester and his wife, Judy. By any measure, it was a fantastic convention. I would like to discuss some of the similarities and differences both in the convention itself and in modeling practices between North America and Australia. I would also like to encourage all of you to consider attending a convention in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or the U.K. These are fantastic events and, in many cases, eye-opening.

The convention was billed as a big event, and the billing was absolutely accurate. Besides inviting representatives from the NMRA to attend and participate, the hosts honored those who originated the Region and who have been loyal members since its founding 25 years ago. The AR was created due to the hard work of many dedicated individuals, not the least of whom was John Saxon, honored at the AR Convention as an NMRA Fellow for all of his many contributions to both the organization and to the hobby of model railroading. Suffice to say, the Region is vibrant, growing, and very dedicated to the NMRA and our many programs, even though they do not have the benefit of participation in many of our activities, given the distances involved.

Australia is a model railroad paradise. Many of the modelers there follow North American practices while others follow European practice or Australia's own quirky but extremely interesting railway development. Australia is the home to perhaps more gauges than anywhere else on earth, and often these gauges existed side by side. Unlike other countries, Australia did not develop "standard gauge" uniformly, but each of Australia's six states set its own "standard gauge." Often, these were not what we consider standard gauge. Queensland selected 3-foot, 6-inch gauge as "standard." New South Wales (the home of Sydney) selected standard gauge. At some point, standard gauge became the norm, not the exception. Yet, a number of small industrial lines continue with various gauges creating a delightful tapestry of little railways crying out to be modeled.

The Australian modeler also tends to be more craftsman-oriented than his or her U.S. counterpart. While we were there, we were able to attend Australia's largest train show, held at Liverpool, a suburb of Sydney. I noted that numerous vendors offered detail parts and materials for scratchbuilding, with far fewer domestic kits produced, especially in the structure and detail area. American products are quite common. Australia also has some first-rate hobby shops in its major cities, although I was not able to visit any on this trip. On previous trips, however, I have found these shops to be well-stocked with a combination of both American and European products along with a small number of domestically created products.

Australian Regional conventions are different from our own. They are segregated into parts. The main convention is held over a weekend and generally at a relatively inexpensive venue, such as a local high school or college. The 25th Anniversary Convention was held in a very nice suburb of Sydney called "Castle Hill" at Oak Hill College, a local private high school (referred to as a "college" there). The Saturday dinner was held in one of the halls. clinics were held in

2010 January 25th Australasian Region Anniversary

various classrooms, and the gymnasium was used for modular displays and vendor sales. It was also the place where the buffet lunch was set up.

Both the Saturday and Sunday sessions of the convention were dedicated to clinics, both plenary (all attended) and individual such as are held in North American conventions. The topics were very familiar, with an emphasis on DCC, operation, locomotive repair and construction, and a wide variety of prototype topics. I was honored to give a plenary clinic on trends on model railroading, and At Large-Worldwide Director Tony Koester presented clinics on operations and multi-deck layout construction. Unfamiliar to American modelers was the morning and afternoon tea break and the hot lunch buffet served each day. This was all part of the registration cost. I must say, it was quite nice and quite civilized to take a "tea break" in the middle of the morning and afternoon clinic sessions with the opportunity to discuss the hobby with convention attendees.

Following the Sunday session, the convention moved to self-guided layout tours with carpooling. Monday through Wednesday was dedicated to these layout tours in the greater Sydney area with layouts grouped according to geographic location for various days. Through the generous help of Pacific Director Peter Jensen, AR President Sowerby Smith, and AR member Rob Petersen, the American contingent (spouses included) attending the convention was transported to most of the various layouts. The work done was uniformly excellent.

Basements are rare although not unheard of in the Sydney area. More commonly, layouts are located in outdoor sheds adjacent to the main home. The layouts we saw ranged

from English 7 mm prototype to American HO and N scale. There were double-deck layouts (Tony Koester noted these with great appreciation) and layouts in all stages of construction. One highlight was visiting Geoff Knott and his superb dioramas, which are absolutely museum quality. As in North America, layout visits of course included a visit with the host and the opportunity to see how people in Australia live. We visited some splendid neighborhoods under sparkling spring skies (with the occasional down-pour) and met some wonderful people.

At one large N scale railroad, our friend Lumpy, who collects Coca-Cola memorabilia, was delighted to discover that our host's wife was a Coke collector with a substantial shed full of collectible items. He was able to obtain a few items unique to Australia for his collection.

You never know what you will find. That included seeing some Wallabies — small kangaroos — roaming the property. Peter Jensen even hosted a wine tasting and lunch of barbecued kangaroo at his winery. Now *that* was different.

As with North American conventions, there was also a very vibrant non-rail program, in which my wife Margaret participated. Under the splendid guidance of Yvonne Howarth, wife of Convention Chairman David Howarth, Toni Saxon, and Jenny Smith (Sowerby's wife), a busload of non-rail spouses explored the historic portions of Sydney and Sydney's famous beaches, including an unforgettable ferry ride across the Sydney harbor. Of course, as with North American conventions, Saturday night was reserved for the "banquet," and the food, also served buffet style, was certainly a notch above normal fare. An Honorary Life Membership was awarded

to former Board of Trustees member David North for his outstanding work in helping to establish the ABC program, which saves NMRA costs by allowing off-shore and non-American regions to administer their own program. A number of achievement awards and Golden Spike awards were also presented, and an American railroad trivia contest formed part of the entertainment. The questions were tough and our table did not win.

All who attended from the United States were im-

pressed with the quality, thought, and preparation put into this convention. We all agreed that any NMRA member would benefit from attending such a convention. While the cost to attend might be higher than our normal budgets allow, I can assure you that a visit to Australia is well worth the effort. First of all, the modeling level is extremely high and the shops are stocked with interesting items. Second, the Australian modeler is the nicest person you'll ever meet. We have found on all three of our Australian trips that the people in Australia are about as nice as they come. Thirdly, the railroading is very, very interesting. From the Puffing Billy, which is a 30-inch gauge steam operation, to the Zig Zag Railway, Australia has some interesting railroad experiences awaiting you. There is lots to see, and other than getting used to vehicles operating on the "wrong" side of the road for North American eyes, Australia is a very comfortable place for an American or Canadian to visit. It is very similar to our culture and our countries. Last, there is much of interest for non-rails in Australia as well. From the famous Sydney Opera House to Victoria Market in Melbourne, there's plenty to see and do for those not into trains.

BOD member Tony Koester has often expressed his belief that conventions should offer more than just a model railroad experience but become a destination point for a family vacation. Well, that is true in spades for attending a BR or AR convention overseas. Remember: As an NMRA member, you have a large number of friends in Canada, the U.K., and Australia/New Zealand just waiting to meet you. These are people who share your interest and your passion, and they cannot wait to make you feel at home. I find it interesting that Australians attend our conventions in greater numbers than I suspect Americans attend theirs. They find benefit in attending NMRA conventions. I believe that there is great benefit in attending a Canadian, AR, or BR convention. I hope that you will put that on your list of things to do, and I'm sure you will discover, as did we, that there is no better place for model railroads than Australia!

Our thanks to Convention Committee members David Howarth, Peter Jensen, John Montgomery, Sowerby Smith, Gerry Hopkins, and everyone who made us "Yanks" feel so welcomed.

Thanks, Charlie, for that report, thanks to the AR for the invitation, and congratulations on your 25th! I'll be back next month with an update on the Howell Day Museum and other news.

M-N



The AR 25th Anniversary Convention Committee and distinguished visitors, left to right: Allen Pollock, Rob Peterson, John Montgomery, David Howarth, Sowerby Smith, Tony Koester, Charlie Getz, Peter Jensen, and Jim "Lumpy" Lupfer. The photo was taken at Peter Jensen's winery in the Hunter Valley after a wine tasting and kangaroo barbecue, which accounts for the rather large smiles on everyone's face.



The Diamond Club:

Keeping the NMRA relevant and accessible for another 75 years

article and photographs by Gerry Leone, MMR
NMRA Communications Director



Sometimes the best way to tell where you are is to look back and see where you've been. Rewind the clock to 1935 and you'll find Amelia Earhart becoming the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California and Babe Ruth playing his last career game. You'll find the debut of Porky Pig, parking meters, and Monopoly. You'll also find the dedication of the greatest engineering feat then known to man: Hoover Dam.

Now turn around and take a look at the road we're on, and where we're headed. Big change from 1935, isn't it? One of the first things you'll notice is that the Internet has made a very big world a very small place!

And that's exactly why we've started The Diamond Club. It's our way of beginning the journey ahead of us...laying the rails that will lead the NMRA into tomorrow, and into the future.

The Diamond Club is a fundraiser specifically designed to help bring www.nmra.org fully into the 21st century by providing our members with expanded content — the kind of useful content people today and tomorrow will expect to find on the Internet. The NMRA needs to raise \$75,000 to cover the expected expenses.

Some of the expanded www.nmra.org content includes:

- scans of all of the photos in the Kalmbach Memorial Library (KML) — about 100,000 in all
- an events calendar that will include activities from Divisions, Regions, and National
- a "Members Only" area that will contain a wealth of information accessible exclusively to NMRA members (such as the newly developed Data Sheets)
- expanded *SCALE RAILS* content

- streaming or downloadable videos of clinics

- sound sample downloads
- an "Ask the Masters" question and answer site

- an up-to-date online model railroad magazine index.

This is the kind of content that will truly make our website your portal to more fun in scale model railroading!

The project will begin with the digitizing of the KML photo collection. To make the process efficient and practical, current plans call for the NMRA to hire an experienced firm that will build what will amount to a massive photo website at www.nmra.org. All visitors to the site will be able to view the watermarked photograph thumbnails, but only NMRA members and researchers who pay a fee will be able to order prints of the photos. It's estimated

that the digitization project will take over a year to complete.

Other aspects of the expanded web content will happen in tandem with the digitization project and will be introduced throughout the coming months.

Members can join The Diamond Club by making a contribution:

Join at the Silver Level by contributing \$75, and you'll receive a silver 75th Anniversary commemorative pin, and have your name listed in *SCALE RAILS* as a contributor.

Join at the Gold Level when you contribute \$750, and you'll receive a gold-plated 75th Anniversary pin, a golf shirt with the NMRA's 75th Anniversary logo, and have your name printed in *SCALE RAILS* as a contributor.

Join at the Diamond Level by contributing \$7,500 and you'll receive a diamond-and-gold Anniversary pin, a golf shirt and sweater with the NMRA's 75th Anniversary logo and your embroidered name, free Milwaukee convention and banquet registration, and have your name and photo published in *SCALE RAILS*.

You can join the Diamond Club by visiting www.nmra.org/diamondclub, or by calling Headquarters at 423-892-2846.

Make a contribution to the NMRA that will make a contribution to scale model railroading for decades to come...a contribution that will let our members and all paying railfans gain instant access to our photo library. Make your contribution to the Diamond Club, and make your mark on the NMRA's future. 🚂

2010 February

Fran Hale earns Master Model Railroader #431. Fran becomes the 6th lady to earn MMR. This also makes Fran and her husband W. Miles Hale the third couple to earn their MMRs.

Below: Miles Hale, MMR; John Lowrance, MMR; and Fran Hale, MMR, showed a variety of rock molds to the class and then demonstrated how to use each of them. The technique used for the large rock mold was very interesting and featured a pillow-push method to keep the plaster from cracking up while setting.



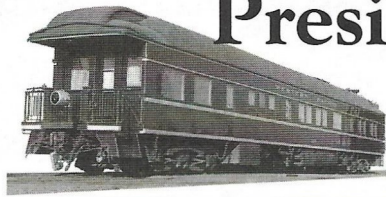
W. Miles Hale / John Lowrance / Fran Hale

2010 February

W. Gene Swanson earned his Master Model Railroader 412.

Guest column:
The Howell Day
Scale Model
Railroad Museum

by Charlie Getz



President's Car

NMRA President Mike Brestel

As a member of both the NMRA Board of Directors and the Howell Day Scale Model Railroad Museum (HDM) committee, I would like to discuss the purpose, history, and benefits of the HDM to NMRA members. I also hope to correct some misperceptions about the HDM.

Some members may wonder why a scale model railroad museum is necessary or would be considered a benefit of membership. The answer simple — if you enjoy model railroading, it is instructive, helpful and illuminating to know how we got to where we are.

The only way to do that is to preserve the history of our hobby and industry, and to show how that history is intertwined with the hobby of today. As a columnist for the *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*, I have occasionally written articles about the history of our hobby. I was amazed to discover that approximately 60 percent of the products available 50 years ago are still available today. Some have been updated but many have not. Thus, I have maintained that we currently are enjoying the golden age of model railroading. We have the best of today's products and technology, coupled with the best of yesterday. It is possible to assemble kits identical to those assembled by notable modelers such as John Allen and Whit Towers.

There are far more tie-ins to history in today's modeling than just product availability. As part of our outreach to the general public, we appeal to their nostalgia and fond memories of childhood trains. That is part of our history. We cannot appreciate how good model railroading is today without a comparison to the model railroading of 20, 30 or 50 years ago.

More than a decade ago, through the generous donation by pioneer hobby shop owner and manufacturer Howell Day, a committee was established by the NMRA Board of Trustees to study, implement and create a museum of scale model railroading. I have served on that committee almost since the beginning, along with former NMRA President and Howell Day Fund Trustee Bob Charles. Other committee members include noted editor and publisher Bob Brown of the *Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*, replacing the late Hal Carstens; Lee Riley of Bachmann Industries; Tom Draper, who acts as treasurer for the committee and fund; John Roberts, former NMRA president and a member of the NMRA BOD, who acts as the chair of the committee; and Allen Pollock, NMRA former president and current VP, who acts as industry liaison.

Because of the creation of an endowment by the late Howell Day, as well the generosity of his widow, Ruth, the estate continues to provide some funding for the work of the committee. However, this amount, as generous as it is, is not sufficient to accomplish all of the goals of our committee. As members may have noticed, the committee for some years has offered collectible and commemorative cars for sale. The committee also sells surplus materials that were donated by members or their families and have been deemed unnecessary for the museum's future use.

2010 March Con't.

The Howell Day Museum Committee has set two goals: a long-term and a more attainable short-term goal. The long-term goal is the creation of a permanent museum on scale model railroading. We are currently considering the historic Southern Pacific railyards area in Sacramento, California, for that permanent museum. There is a cinder block blacksmith shop building that is adjacent to the new Museum of Railroad Technology, currently under development by the California Department of Parks, and that building may be available to house the museum. Preliminary discussions with the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) have been very positive and they support the concept of locating the permanent museum adjacent to their newly expanded operations. This would allow the possibility of selling a common ticket for both attractions, which would certainly be to our advantage. However, this building is currently controlled by a private developer. While we continue to work with the CSRM and the private developer to secure that location if possible, it is unclear whether it will work out for us.

In the short-term, and as announced in both *SCALE RAILS* and the major model railroad media, the NMRA on behalf of the HDM has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create a gallery exhibit. While the exhibit is not the museum for which we have planned, it will allow us an excellent way to introduce the public to the hobby of scale model railroading and its history. It is that CSRM gallery exhibit, and not the ultimate Howell Day Museum we hope to establish, which I intend to discuss in the rest of this column.

Through member feedback we have learned that here are two major misconceptions about our work as a committee that I want to address. *First, the committee has not used and will not use any dues money to create either the gallery exhibit or the permanent museum.* We consider it our sacred trust to utilize only monies received by donation, sales, or other independent sources to fund our activities. Thus, while we are a function of the NMRA and are bound by policy decisions of the BOD, we certainly do not see ourselves as an NMRA-funded program. We pay our own way and we raise our own funds. In addition, we are in the process of incorporating as a nonprofit corporation affiliated with the NMRA, but

separate and distinct from the larger group. This separate incorporation should further reassure any members that our activities will not be funded by dues money.

Second, there is not a scale model railroad museum already in existence at NMRA headquarters in Chattanooga. The headquarters building is not set up for such a museum. The space is inadequate, and the number of visitors is simply insufficient to maintain such an operation. The basement of the NMRA building does provide excellent storage space for our collection, and we appreciate the generosity of the BOD in allowing that use. Please note, however, that this is space that otherwise would be unused, and the committee pays its share of insurance, utilities, and security for this space.

In my opinion, the best way to introduce the public to scale model railroading is to educate them on the history of its development. By seeing familiar artifacts from their childhood or placing those artifacts in the context of an earlier era, the public will learn that scale model railroading goes back almost as far as the prototype. In our proposed gallery exhibit, we hope to introduce our hobby to the more than 600,000 annual visitors to the CSRM, in part by addressing that history. Did you know, for example, that there is a model railroading link to the *Titanic* disaster? Model railroading did not cause the ship to sink, but the entire U.S. shipment of a British model railroad magazine sank with the *Titanic*, and in the subsequent issue of that magazine, the publisher apologized to his U.S. readers for the loss of that issue. As another example, a love of model railroading led to the creation of Disneyland by live-steam modeler Walt Disney. These and many other stories wait to be told.

To tell those stories, we need your help. We need your financial help in raising a significant amount of money to develop the gallery exhibit at the CSRM — an exhibit which promises to be unparalleled in its scope and potential. The CSRM is the third largest tourist attraction in California, drawing an astounding 600,000-plus paid attendees each year. We have been offered free space (i.e., no rent!) of a substantial size, adjacent to the existing and excellent Sefton Toy Train Exhibit, to introduce scale model railroading to the public. In that space, as Bob Brown will

illustrate in a future issue of *SCALE RAILS*, we hope to display outstanding model work, a short tour of the history of our hobby, and a section on the hobby today, including how interested visitors might become involved in scale model railroading. I can think of no better recruitment tool for our hobby — and for the NMRA — than this exhibit in one the premier railroad museums in the United States.

We have a gallery design that has been approved in concept by both the NMRA BOD and the CSRM. We have an estimated budget which, although daunting, is obtainable. We are seeking artifacts, donations, and economic support to accomplish this fantastic opportunity. Any donation to the NMRA where no services are provided in return may have favorable tax consequences for U.S. members. (For other countries, please check with your tax advisor.) The NMRA is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations to it may be tax deductible. This includes artifacts as well as cash donations. The committee uses your donations in two ways. Certain materials judged to have intrinsic value are retained, either for the gallery exhibit or for the permanent museum we hope to build some years from now. Other donations, which are either duplicative or deemed unnecessary to preserve, fund our efforts through surplus resale in accordance with IRS regulations. In the past, we have utilized the silent auction at the NMRA National Convention as a vehicle to sell this surplus material as a further member benefit. We are always looking at other options to make these materials more widely available to NMRA members.

I hope that these paragraphs have served both to acquaint you with the Howell Day Museum and to answer any questions you may have about our plans and operations. As always, we are available to answer any and all questions you may have — and to accept your donation to the HDM!

Charlie Getz, guest columnist

The Division **IS** the NMRA

article by Howard Goodwin Superintendent, Piedmont Division, SER, NMRA

MARCH 2010

Over the years, great minds have assembled in the ever-important quest of preserving the NMRA for future generations of model railroaders. Volumes have been written, exotic programs have been created, and pronouncement of vast volumes of resources and information made available to the membership. Has any of this really made any impact on those uninitiated considering membership in the NMRA? Not really! How then, do we not only entice and retain those who would consider membership in our organization at the ever increasing cost of that membership? The answer is and has always been right in front of our noses practically since the inception of the organization. Very simply, it's called the Division.

The Division by definition is a subgroup under the Region. It is essentially the link between the individual member and the NMRA. Every Region should have Divisions, organized in some fashion by geographical location for the most part, but somehow organized. Its function is to inform and educate those in these geographical areas of events and programs offered by the NMRA and to provide some activity or program for the NMRA member, and for the general public in an effort to recruit new NMRA members. Sounds really complicated, you say?

It took my moving to Atlanta, Georgia, after being in the NMRA for more than 20 years, to realize that the Division is THE grassroots organization of the NMRA. It is, in fact, THE NMRA. What happens at Division level is perceived as being the NMRA. Why? Because the Division is in the face of the potential as well as the actual NMRA member. What takes place or doesn't take place at Division level makes or breaks membership, or any attempt to recruit members. Our Division in Atlanta, the Piedmont Division, is living and breathing proof that active divisions can be instrumental in helping to increase NMRA membership. There is not a railroading event that takes place in the Atlanta area where we have a membership booth that we don't sign up new members. Our success is a matter of record: What makes selling the NMRA easy is the Division and its many activities.

While I realize that not all Regions have the luxury of having a large Division in some areas, there can be programs offered even on a smaller, or sub-Divisional, scale in an effort to serve and entice membership. While the thought of cloning the Piedmont Division for the rest of the NMRA is nice, it is obviously not possible as the exact things we do may not work in each scenario, but our general approach can be used in part or whole by any Division. What it takes is people — people who are willing to give some time in order to help us save and support each other and grow our organization. In some cases, all that's needed is a little kick-start.

So what do we do in our Division that makes all this work? First off, we have a monthly meeting and program. We have a clinic given by Division members at each meeting dealing with some facet of model railroading. Our meetings will typically attract between 80 and 90 members, month after month. While this represents more members than many Divisions have, it can be proportional depending upon how many members you can get to participate in such a program. Our Division membership is well over 400. Not every Division needs to hold a monthly program. It can be once every other month or so. The key is consistency. If you offer it, offer it consistently. That way the member, or potential member, will feel as if you are trying to meet his or her model railroading needs and will come to rely on the consistency. If you have such a program, you will attract more and more people and your group will grow.

Our monthly program also includes a monthly home layout tour, held on the weekend following the monthly meeting. This serves to help inspire and educate those who are in the process of building or considering building a layout. Questions are asked and answered, which cultivates the learning experience. Our program is eagerly anticipated by the membership, as evidenced by nearly 20 percent of the membership attending meetings, as well as the constant stream of visitors considering membership. We advertise our monthly program in all the local hobby shops that actively support us and our programs. Any

program you can provide is better than no program at all and is well worth the time and effort. Any number of venues can be found and made available to hold this type of event, including churches, community centers, and libraries.

Another activity our Division sponsors is an annual train show. Vendors and dealers come from all over the country to display their wares while several modular model railroad groups participate and set up displays. We also have a model contest where models can be displayed, viewed, and, if desired, judged for AP awards. You may not be in a position to have such an elaborate affair in your division, but perhaps consider some sort of model railroad swap meet. It doesn't have to be a big operation, merely something you can do on a regular basis to unite the local model railroad population and to attract other potential members.

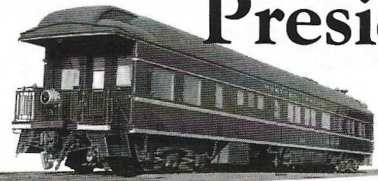
Other possible activities include but are not limited to:

- Model railroad auctions, live and silent
- An annual program during November, Model Railroad Month
- Teaching the Railroading Merit Badge for local Boy Scout Groups
- Having Boys and Girls Clubs visit one of the local home layouts

The bottom line is that if our beloved NMRA is to survive and prosper, we need to make it happen on a local level and that is the Division. Show me an active division and I will show you a healthy NMRA membership. I know there are other active and successful Divisions in the NMRA, and we can learn something from each one of them. Most will agree that cultivating members is a whole lot easier because of the programs they are providing and the visibility of the NMRA that is created.

The Division IS the NMRA. I'll bet that if our less-than-active Divisions were to contact those active and healthy Divisions for ideas and assistance, the support would flow like the Niagara River (on either side of the border, eh!). We have to help each other plant the seeds that will become the next generation of model railroaders. 🚂

Our Next 75



President's Car

Whenever we celebrate a significant anniversary — in this case, the NMRA 75th — we

NMRA President Mike Brestel

can't help but speculate what might happen in the future. We've made it this far, so what's next? While such speculation and prediction can be wildly, even laughably, wrong in hindsight (been trackside lately to photograph the atomic-powered locomotives?), it's just human nature to look to the future while we celebrate the past and experience the present.

Every time I think about celebrating the NMRA's 75th, my mind turns to what might happen in the next 75, 50, 25, or even ten years. I suspect the future has been on your mind as well, and that we've all been doing some tea-leaf reading in the past few months.

One thing that has been occupying my thoughts lately is the future of communication with our membership. Magazine and newspaper printing, paper, and distribution costs are rising, especially for our ABC members. Currently, about eight percent of our members do not subscribe to *SCALE RAILS*, and with the increasing costs, the number of disconnected members could easily rise in the years ahead. Moreover, with the rapid rise in electronic media, chat lists, the NMRA InfoNet, blogs, Twitter, and the like, folks now expect more timely delivery of information, from BOD meeting reports to news about upcoming meets and conventions.

So it's easy to see that as time passes, we will have to move more of our deliverables to nmra.org, the NMRA website, where communication can be nearly instantaneous. We're already gearing up for that day with a coming members-only section of the website, featuring the old and new Data Sheets, online membership and convention registration, an online database and other Region and Division management aids, extra material that complements *SCALE RAILS* articles, a possible online resuscitation of the NMRA magazine index, an *Ask the Masters* column/blog, and many other initiatives. Our need to beef up our Internet and web presence is the reason we've launched our Diamond Club, and early results indicate that many of you see the need for these improvements as well.

A couple of months ago, Tony Koester passed on to me an article from his local paper that caught his eye. Called *The Pros and Cons of Technology*, by Lee Bowman (Scripps Howard News Service, December 15, 2009), the piece is about how using the Internet and surfing the web tend to fire up unused portions of the brain in older folks (our association is aging, in case you haven't noticed!).

First the bad news: The article says that 46 percent of those 65 and older regularly use the Internet. That's *regularly*, not *occasionally* or *when forced*. Although some of us might like to pretend otherwise, this rather low Internet penetration is a current fact of life for us in our communications with our membership and other railroad hobbyists. It certainly wouldn't do to put all of our eggs into an electronic basket, since more than half of our target age group is not yet comfortable forgoing the magazine for the laptop.

Now for the good news: Net usage among the 55-to-78 age group nearly doubled between 2005 and 2008. This is a very positive trend and shows a remarkable increase in electronic penetration in our median age group in a very short time.

More good news: Researchers found that brain activity markedly ramped up among those in a study group who used the Internet for an hour a day, every day.

And even more good news: The study said *regularly*, which means a lot more than half the folks in the study use the Internet at least *occasionally*. At least they're familiar with the concept!

(text continues on page 6)

The article also quotes a University of Michigan study that suggests that spending time online can significantly reduce depression among seniors through increased contact with family, friends, and interests. So using the Internet can actually be good for us!

I'm about a year or two younger than the NMRA's (and the hobby's) median age. And if they're studying me, they're finding that I'm on the web more and more. While I still prefer to curl up with an actual printed book, magazine, or newspaper, I do love my e-mail and Google, and I'm on the computer doing one thing or another more than half the time I'm awake. So like many of you, I'm pretty far along on the whole electronic media thing.

For those of you who are not yet connected, I want to encourage you to look at some of the ways to get hooked up very inexpensively. New netbooks, which are basically tiny laptops designed primarily for

web surfing, cost as little as \$179. That's less than an HO diesel with sound and DCC! And smaller, more capable devices like the iPod Touch and iPad are being developed all the time.

Also, in many communities, you can get online for free using the PCs at your local library or senior center. You can chat with your scattered families, get photos of the grandkids, and tap into the ever-growing content that the NMRA is putting online. E-mail accounts with surprising capability are available from many reputable providers for no charge whatsoever.

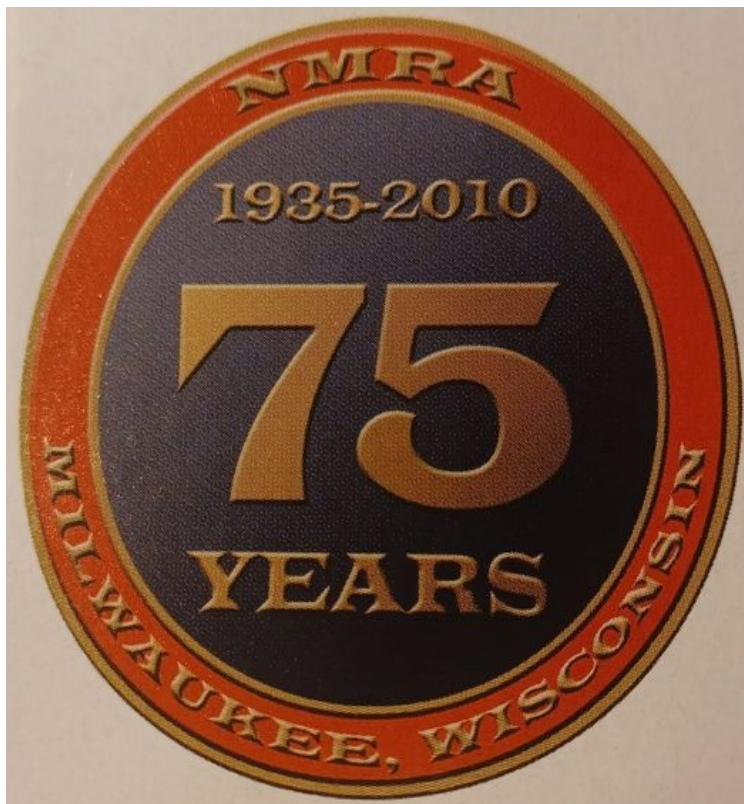
I'm the second youngest member of the Cincinnati Model Railway Club, a group of about 25. The building that houses our layout is equipped with wireless Internet access, and at times during club meetings or work sessions, it's not unusual to see six or eight of the members sitting over their netbooks or laptops, checking their e-mail, watching a railroad video, checking a prototype rail-

road roster, or using the online magazine index. Some of them don't even have access at home, preferring to get connected just at the club or at a local library. Only one of our members is a holdout against the electronic tide, and he's wavering.

While we can't tell where the world is going to go in the next few years (got your personal helicopter out in the garage?), there is no doubt that the demand for NMRA web services will continue to increase. And there is no doubt that we will find more and more ways to do things electronically and instantaneously that formerly took reams of paper, a personal meeting, and two or three months.

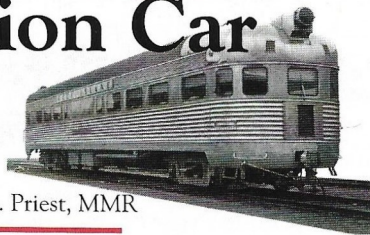
The opportunities for growth and advancement will be there more and more in the electronic age. Our challenge is to recognize and respond to these opportunities, both as individuals and as an organization.

Mike



Observation Car

N Scale at 45 in the U.S.



SCALE RAILS Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR

I am amazed at how fast time passes. This year marks the 45th anniversary of N Scale introduction into the American market. The origins of the gauge trace back to England in the first half of the 1960s. A company called Lone Star introduced a line of 1:152 models that operated on 9mm track originally named OOO gauge. In 1963, West German model manufacturer Arnold released its extensive Rapido Line of 1:160 scale models that also operated on 9mm track. Almost simultaneously, Minित्रix, also from West Germany, and KATO from Japan began producing and marketing N scale equipment, representing a wide variety of models and eras.

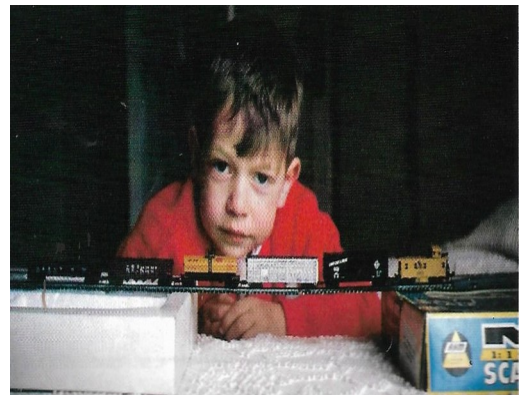
It took several years for the N scale manufacturers to begin to sell their goods in the United States. The year of my birth, 1965, marked that date with the introduction of 1:160th scale models. The name N scale was adopted at that time and the scale began to gain momentum. One obvious target market was modelers with limited space to build a model railroad. My father, Robert L. Priest, was one of those people who wanted a railroad but had limited space. He began the construction on his N scale empire in 1968. Although I was only three or four years old, I remember the AHM boxes with their distinctive yellow and blue graphics. Dad built several buildings and included an airport with a tower topped with a red light. I was in heaven!

The new scale began to take off and by the mid-1970s had a firm foothold among American modelers. N scale dominated the Japanese market as well as several other countries. In the late 1980s, U.S. N scale sales and production skyrocketed. Manufacturers began using finer profile flanges, 0.020 to be exact, producing a greater breadth of models and trackwork. Responding to the expanding marketshare, new companies began manufacturing N scale products and established manufacturers began tooling and marketing an ever-broadening N scale line of product.

On this the Sapphire anniversary of N scale, I can honestly state the two of my closest friends have fantastic appearing, running, and operating N scale railroads. I admit that I am often a little jealous of their train size, huge yards, and train-to-scenery ratios. They have benefitted from the immense market that now feeds the N scale machine. So much so that there are companies specific to N scale not to mention a couple of N scale specific magazines.

Happy birthday N scale. Long may you live!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Stephen M. Priest.



The More Things Change, The More They Remain the Same.

In August 2008, Rick Shoup, MMR wrote in one of the NMRA listserves *"One of the major problems is member retention! [It's] fairly easy to get someone to try for six months or a year but much harder to keep him renewing."*

Rick has hit the spike squarely on the head here. Getting new members in the door actually costs us more than their dues in the first year. If they don't stay for the second, we lose not just money and member, we now have someone who can and will say, "I was a member once, but didn't think it was worth renewing." Harsher words about a membership organization are hard to find.

Thus, when I was the Chief Clerk of the Los Angeles Division back in the last century, I conducted a study of recruiting and retention. My primary question was, "What means of recruitment are most likely to induct members who renew for a second year?" The results were very interesting.

We learned that there were only two programs that retained more than 50 percent of new members into the second year: One was Member Aid. At the time, the LA Division had signs up in nearly every hobby shop advertising the availability of expert help. Our Member Aid Chair would take the calls and refer them to a member near the requester for help. I don't have the statistics any more, but I probably made five or six "house calls" per year in this era. Membership wasn't required for the first problem, but we did ask them to hear a five-minute pitch, left them a recent *BULLETIN*, region and division newsletter, along with an application.

My theory is that these folks knew what the advantages of the NMRA were before they ever signed up. They knew what they were getting into the first time, liked it, and thus would continue their membership.

Our conversion rate wasn't 100 percent (again, I no longer have the statistics), but I recall that it was about 75 percent. And that was with only a trivial cost for a few signs, some phone calls, a occasional evening of model railroading, and spare back issues. I call that a pretty terrific program that well deserves to be copied.

The second successful program was involvement — giving folks a job to do first, then asking for membership. Yeah, sounds backwards, but here's what I did. As Clinic Chair for the region convention, I wanted a host for each clinic room to introduce each presenter, switch the lights, run the projector, call me for help, and cue the applause when it was time to end one clinic and get ready for the next.

I divided the clinics into morning, afternoon, and evening sessions of three clinics each, and got a budget to provide free registration to anyone who would host two such sessions. (PCR conventions lasted four days back then and there were 48 such sessions to cover.)

To find staff, I went to one of the largest MRR clubs in the division; one selected because there were only two NMRA members in the group. I gave them a pitch for attending the convention, dangled the free registration deal, and got nearly my entire clinic host staff to sign up that night.

My thank-you letter after the convention included a membership application, and the question, "Now that you know what we're all about, why not join the party?" All but two did, and all but one renewed for a second year. Another nearly miraculous conversion rate.

What's the common thread here? Involvement. Show potential members the services, or get them into the group that's making good things happen, and membership becomes an obvious afterthought. Not only do you get members who stay with this approach, you tend to get members who will be active, both in participation and in volunteering to do the work of the Association.

I would encourage every Division to try Member Aid outreach as a recruitment tool. Conventions are more expensive today, so free registration may have to give way to a substantial discount, but since the local group never seems to have quite enough people do run the show, the cheap manpower may be worth it even without the recruitment bonus.

And while you're at it, try to come up with a program to involve first-year mem-

bers. If all they get in the first year is a stack of magazines, their incentive to renew is low. Getting phone calls from other members inviting them to car pool to meets is trivial, but even if they don't participate they now know that there's more to the organization than publishing. A Welcoming Committee can do wonders for retention, especially among members who don't normally attend meets or conventions.

I'll get off my soapbox now, but I'll close by encouraging you all to think less of raw recruitment and more of involvement. We aren't in the business of selling magazines, we're a membership organization, and that means we need to find ways to get members together (even if only online) and involved in some common project. There are lots of ways to do this, but I've seen too many regions and divisions that do nothing of the sort.

My present region doesn't even send out renewal notices or have membership applications available at division meets. How likely is it that I'll renew, even with my long history in the NMRA? (Member since the 1960s, Life Member since the 1980s, employee for eight years.)

To get a new member, you have to ask. To keep a member, you have to involve. Simple as that. 🍷

DIVISION SUPERS!

NMRA HQ has brochures & materials you can use to solicit new members. Email Jenny at nmrahq@aol.com or call 423-892-2846 and get a "New Member Promo Pack."



IN MEMORIAM

ALBERT J. KAMM JR., MMR 340

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Al Kamm, Jr. MMR, age 79. Al was a well known author and EMD subject matter expert with many articles and drawings published in the model railroad press and *Trains* magazine. Al modeled in O and On3 after migrating from HO and HOn3. He was a life member of the NMRA and served as National Narrow Gauge Standards Committee Chairman and held several division level offices. He received Master Model Railroad Certificate No. 340. He was a charter member of the Midwest Narrow Gaugers.

Albert's first train was an American Flyer Burlington *Zephyr*, which he received one Christmas. He remained with that scale until 1941 when his father took him to see the railroad layout at the Museum of Science and Industry. His father was a well-known O gauge modeler who belonged to the Buffalo, New York Railroad Club and was vice president of the NMRA in 1938 and president in 1939. Since there were 500 miles between father and son, the

debate about "nature and/or nurture" lasted for years with Buffalo friends and relatives. But that trip was the spark that moved Al to HO scale starting with a Varney 0-4-0T Dockside and Varney Comet and Megow freight car kits.

Living within a few blocks of the Rock Island Railroad, he used his first camera to take pictures of the trains he saw there and at the yards a few miles away. With another modeler friend, he made trips to the Joliet Railroad Station to watch and photograph Rock Island, New York Central, Santa Fe, and Chicago & Alton railroads as they passed through.

In the 1950s, after a trip to Colorado, Al decided to model the narrow gauge trains of that area. Starting in HOn3, he soon discovered that On3 was a more practical size and disposed of his HOn3 equipment.

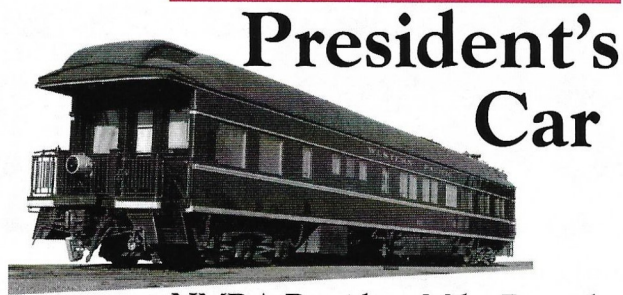
While he had a layout when he lived in Kankakee, Illinois, his subsequent moves did not lend themselves to layouts. When he settled in Frankfort, Illinois, his home layout started out to be strictly On3. Having inherited his father's O scale collection and being a fan of the Rock Island, he soon added a double track loop that ran completely around the basement. He used this trackage to feature his collection of early O scale models, both locomotives and rolling stock, from 1935 to present. Some of the earliest locomotives were handmade. They were operable and were used to pull 50-car trains for NMRA open houses.

As an adjunct to his hobby, Al earned most of his living in railroad-centered businesses. He began with Burgess Handicraft Store and ALL-Nation Hobby Shop. Later he worked at New York Air Brake and Electromotive. He retired from Electromotive as an Air Brake Modification Engineer after more than 27 years.

Along the way he wrote articles for *Model Railroader Magazine* and drew diesel locomotive plans for that publication and for *Model Craftsman*. He provided the information for Dave Morgan's EMD Scrapbook History Series in *Trains* magazine, which was later published as the "EMD Scrapbook" in 1971.

Al had been an NMRA member since 1946 and was a life member. During this time he served on the National Narrow Gauge Standards Committee under Bill Gardener. He had been Director at Large and Vice-President of the Midwest Region. On the Division level he served as Superintendent, Paymaster, and Trainmaster.

RailPass: a good deal for prospects, a better deal for the NMRA



NMRA President Mike Brestel

This month I'd like you to join me in taking a look at probably the least understood weapon in the NMRA's member recruitment arsenal, the RailPass.

The RailPass is the North American recruiter's ultimate weapon. It's a six-month trial membership for U.S. or Canadian prospects that sells for only \$9.95.

Let's say you're working the membership booth at a show somewhere in the U.S. You've tried everything you can think of to convince a would-be member that he should sign up for a year of membership, including a *SCALE RAILS* subscription, for \$58.00. You're desperately looking for ways to convince your potential recruit to forego the purchase of a couple freight cars and give the NMRA a try instead, but he's just not biting; why should he buy a pig in a poke?

There used to be only one thing you could do: back away from offering the *SCALE RAILS* subscription and try to sell your prospect on a membership without the magazine. But a year's membership without the monthly communication and inspiration of *SCALE RAILS* is like a three-legged horse — the ride's just a bit rough. And it can still be a tough sell.

Where the RailPass came from

For quite a number of years the NMRA's Membership team dreamed about a way to give our many volunteer recruiters a tool that would make signing up new members an easier task. They worked with the NMRA Board to come up with something that would show a prospect, not just tell him or her, just what the NMRA is all about.

The idea we finally hit upon was the RailPass, a six-month trial membership that allows new members to experience nearly everything the NMRA has to offer, including a monthly copy of *SCALE RAILS*, for a price that almost no one can refuse — ten bucks.

Our original thought was that a recruiter would keep the RailPass in his figurative back pocket, going through his usual sales routine, offering a Regular Membership and a *SCALE RAILS* subscription, plus a Regional newsletter subscription. Then if it became clear that the prospect was not going to join, the recruiter would start deleting options: drop the Regional newsletter, forget the *SCALE RAILS* subscription. Then, if the prospect was still not biting, nuke him with an offer he absolutely could not refuse — a six-month trial membership, including *SCALE RAILS*, for only \$9.95!

The Board was concerned that we could not offer such a deal without losing money, but when we ran the figures, we discovered that we could do it using *SCALE RAILS* press overruns — copies that would have gone for membership promotion packets or to the shredders anyway — and by eliminating the New-Member Packet that we send to new Regular Members. The Board was concerned that it be strictly a trial membership, so we specified that the RailPass offer could be used only once per person. It was very much an experiment, and it was approved for the 2005 Cincinnati National Convention and scheduled to be evaluated at the following Board meeting.

Well, the RailPass was an immediate hit with both recruiters and customers. It was such a success that many recruiters began offering it as the first thing out of the chute, rather than the

(text continues on page 6)

2010 June

(continued from page 3)

last. For several years it was approved on a temporary, year-by-year basis, but a couple of years ago the Board decided, due to its record of success, to make it a regular part of the Membership Department's arsenal.

The Membership promotions people knew a good thing when they saw it, and they developed a very effective ad offering the RailPass option to prospects. NMRA Canada, which was not included in the original RailPass offer because of our special Canadian-based dues and membership functions, worked with HQ to put together their own RailPass offer.

Today, over five years since the plan was implemented, the RailPass is our number one recruitment tool for U.S.-based members. I don't know the exact Canadian numbers, but I know that it has been popular there as well.

The first criterion for any membership promotion is simple: is it successful? Did it sell memberships? More and more the answer for the RailPass is "yes." At the Hartford Convention and Train Show last summer, our crack membership booth team signed up 250 new members, the vast majority of whom joined using the RailPass. And the RailPass has been used successfully across North America.

Another sign of success: the retention rate for RailPass members has continued to grow, from an initial figure of around 30 percent to a current and still growing rate of 53 percent.

RailPass reservations

I received a letter from a member not too long ago, questioning the advisability of the RailPass program, wondering about its financial soundness, and declaring the retention rate to be far too low. After careful study, I reached the following conclusions, which I shared with the letter writer and with the Board:

While I would not mind at all if the NMRA had a cadre of highly trained membership salespersons, the reality is that most of our membership booths are manned by regular folks who are just doing their bit to share with others what they love about the NMRA. Most of our volunteers have no sales training, and they're going to have better success if they can stand in front of their booth and say, "I love trains and I love the NMRA. For only ten bucks, you'll have six months to find out what I'm so excited about. And I'll give you back a nickel!" So

the RailPass quickly became our volunteers' number one sales tool.

Then I ran the numbers once again on the cost of a RailPass, using current figures I obtained from Office Manager Jenny Hendricks and Publications Manager Larry DeYoung. I found that in most cases a RailPass costs us a little under \$7.00 to administer for six months. So we're OK on the cost of a RailPass for now — and several Directors have suggested that the RailPass has become such an effective recruiting tool for us that we would be wise to continue the program even if it were losing money!

Member retention is Job One

That leaves member retention to be discussed. You may have noticed that one of the recurring themes I have been hitting on in this space over the past several years is the necessity that we develop a system for welcoming new members and bringing them into the life of the NMRA.

We all know from our own experience that the NMRA has much to offer its members: fellowship, training, the opportunity for service, research tools, a great magazine, etc., etc. And we know that it's the new member's experience at the local division that will cause him or her to decide whether or not to stick around after those first six months. But when we have a new member for only six months, we can't mess around — it's absolutely essential that we get him or her into the fold right away.

It won't happen by osmosis. We absolutely must be intentional about providing a new member experience that will convince him that he is appreciated and we want him to stay!

This is the key to our growth and our future success, and that is why we are working so hard to develop new member-only programs and online tools and resources. We must be relevant to the member's needs for him or her to stick around. We have to care — and show that we care — if he's there

Introducing the best deal in model railroading.

Join the NMRA for 6 months for just \$9.95!

- Easy access to one of the world's largest railroad libraries
- Experience fellowship and fun with other members in your area
- Get low rates on special insurance for your layout or collection
- Receive 6 monthly issues of *Scale Rails* magazine
- Be a part of programs like "Modeling With The Masters," Estate Counseling, contests and more!

Also available in Canada!

Visit www.nmra.org to see what you're missing!

Fill out this form and include your payment. **U.S.:** Send \$9.95 (U.S.) to NMRA-Rail Pass Membership, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119. **Canada:** Send \$9.95 (Cdn) to NMRA-Canadian Rail Pass Membership, 69 Schroder Cres., Guelph, ON N1E 7B4, Canada.

Name _____

Address _____

City/St/Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Email _____

☐ Check ☐ Credit card

Credit Card # _____

Credit Card Exp. _____

Signature _____

*Rail Pass offer is for new members and those who have not been NMRA members for two years or more. Individuals can join at Rail Pass rates only once; membership renewal will be at the regular membership rate. Rail Pass members can attend conventions and participate in contests, but cannot vote or hold office and will not receive a New Member Pak.



**So much bang.
So few bucks.**

or not. We have to get him involved in a way that makes him want to be with us.

Organizing for member retention has been a recurring theme in recent issues of *SCALE RAILS*. A few months ago, Charlie Atkinson shared how this is being done in Ohio. Last month Bruce Metcalf wrote about how members in California have approached this vital task. I recall reading earlier how the same goal was approached in the Northeast, and I wrote about what the Southeastern Region is doing to retain members. And I'm sure there are many more efforts taking place that I just haven't heard about.

No matter where we live and no matter what our role is in the organization, welcoming, helping, and supporting one another must be Job One for every one of us. That is how we can continue to increase our new member retention rates.

The RailPass program has been a growing success by just about any measure. But it can be much more than it's been so far. We need to set a goal of 100 percent retention, and we need to develop a system that will help us approach that goal. And that's when the RailPass will have fulfilled its potential.

M.O.

2010 July

Marvin Preussler earned Master Model Railroader 432

2010 August “Scale Rails” name change to: “National Magazine.”

Welcome to Milwaukee!

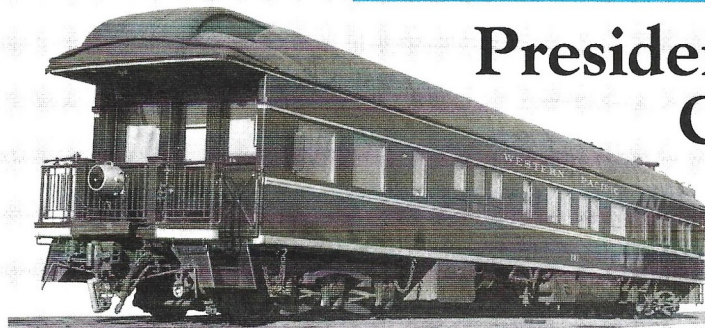
As president of the National Model Railroad Association, it's my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our 75th Anniversary National Convention and Train Show. The NMRA was founded right here in Milwaukee in 1935. We held our 50th Anniversary celebration here, and we're really excited to be here again for our Diamond Jubilee.

For many of you, this will be your first opportunity to participate in a National Train Show, as well as your first chance to see the NMRA's monthly publication, recently renamed *NMRA MAGAZINE*. I hope you enjoy reading this issue, and that you find the train show and related activities both fun and educational.

We sponsor our National Convention and Train Show every summer. The events are hosted in a different city around North America each year, which allows our members and others interested in model railroading to eventually have one of these activities held near them.

Our 2010 National Convention and Show have been planned and presented by NMRA volunteers from around the country and around the world. The Milwaukee Host Committee has been preparing for this week for more than five years, and has worked with our National Meetings and Trade Shows Department to make sure that we all get a chance to see what the Milwaukee area has to offer.

Our National Train Show showcases the latest products offered in the hobby and brings together a wide variety of model railroad displays, dioramas, layouts, and “how-to” presentations focusing on many of the skills we use to create the beautiful models and miniature worlds you will be seeing. If it's your first time seeing model railroading at this level, please don't let it



President's Car

NMRA President Mike Brestel

overwhelm you. Remember that most of us started with a train set under the tree or something similar, and if we can do it, so can you!

We encourage you to learn more about the NMRA and model railroading by visiting us at our website, www.nmra.org. We also invite you to stop by our membership booth, located near the show entrance, where you can learn more about the NMRA's local, regional, and national activities. In addition, volunteers from the local area who are experts on model rail-

roading activity here in the Milwaukee area will staff the booth.

Thanks for attending this year's National Convention and Train Show. I hope you'll enjoy visiting with us as much as we've enjoyed having you here!

Happy 100th birthday, Boy Scouts of America

In addition to being the NMRA's 75th anniversary, the year 2010 is also the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America. Chicago publisher W. D. Boyce incorpo-



Above: Union Pacific 2010 at Terminal Island, California, on April 10, 2010. — David Giglio photo

2010 August

rated the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) organization on February 8, 1910. To commemorate this milestone, the BSA is holding a year-long event called "Celebrating 100 Years of Scouting."

As part of the year-long birthday celebration, the Union Pacific Railroad has designed a special commemorative locomotive paint scheme. This is only the 14th special paint scheme that has adorned a UP locomotive in the nearly 150-year history of the company. The railroad started with a brand new General Electric C45AC locomotive, numbered it 2010, and gave it a base coat of Cub Scout Yellow paint (called Armour Yellow by UP for some reason). UP then applied the BSA badge, the 100th Birthday badge, and ten badges signifying the ten steps a scout takes to reach Eagle Scout, along with the badge for the 2010 National Scout Jamboree.

The National Scout Jamboree, normally held every four years, is a ten-day event, which since 1981 has been held at Fort A. P. Hill, Virginia. The last time the event was

held there were over 43,000 scouts and adult leaders in attendance. One of the highlights of the event is the Merit Badge Midway.

In order to attain the ultimate goal of the rank of Eagle Scout, a scout must earn 21 merit badges. While 11 of the merit badges are required, the scout gets to pick the other ten from a list of 122 possible merit badges. One of those he can choose is the Railroading Merit Badge.

The Railroading Merit Badge will be presented at the Midway again this year, and it is expected that 2,000 scouts will earn the badge at the Jamboree this summer. This is, of course, in addition to the many scouts who earn the badge each year in their own local areas, many as a result of the efforts of the NMRA's corps of volunteer merit badge counselors.

When the scouts depart the Railroading Merit Badge station at the end of the day, they receive a bag of parting gifts. This year, an NMRA member who is also active in the BSA has made sure that a copy of this issue of the *NMRA MAGAZINE* will be in

each and every scout's bag as he departs the station.

Congratulations, scouts, on both your achievement and your birthday, and we hope you like what you see! Please visit our website at www.nmra.org and take a look around. You can also contact our headquarters by phone, email, or through our website if you would like to learn even more about railroading, modeling, and the NMRA's activities in your area. Our contact information is right here in the front of the magazine. We'd love to hear from you!

Mike

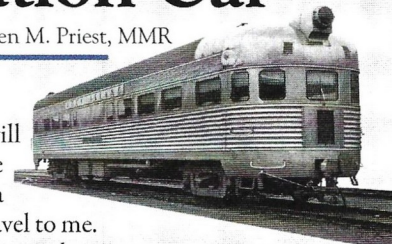
2010 August

The Coming Revolution

I have just returned from a fact-finding mission to the NMRA Headquarters in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Because we do so much digital scanning and archive management work here at Paired Rail, I was invited to visit the HQ and put forth my two cents. The archives are very impressive. Almost all railroads are represented in the collection and there are tens of thousands of images supporting railroad history throughout the ages. The library also has hundreds of prototype drawings as well as timetables, track charts, and reams of miscellaneous railroad paperwork. As you may have noticed, the NMRA Board of Directors and president Mike Brestel have been working diligently to raise funding to support digitizing the collection and find a conduit to allow members to access the materials. What a great day for the NMRA: This is an honorable and lofty goal for our society, and what a fantastic membership value this will be! The process set in motion will change membership dynamics forever. Imagine being able to research the Kalmbach Memorial Library online. Imagine being able to search thousands of drawings and images to find supporting material for your latest modeling or writing project from the comfort of your own home. As an author, book publisher, and modeler, the mere thought conjures up the pos-

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



sibilities of projects that will now be affordable because I do not have to travel to a research archive; it will travel to me.

And in the comfort of my own home on my time-table to boot. The measure of any library/archive is its ability to make materials conveniently available at a reasonable price. One of the challenges of a static or physical library is the reality that it has to be located somewhere. While this is great for those who live close by, it is a deterrent to those who are at a distance. Travel is costly. A web presence/researchable site removes the distance and allows anyone on the planet to research and download. This is *very* important to the mission of our library/archive. This type of pioneering direction is key as we push forth into the next 75 years of the NMRA. So get your pencils out and start thinking about your next writing or modeling project because the process of researching is about to get markedly easier, cheaper, and more rewarding.

Stephen M. Priest

2010 August Positioning NMRA For Our Next 75 Years

You're reading an historic issue of the National Model Railroad Association's periodical. The August 2010 edition inaugurates a new name, *NMRA MAGAZINE*, which will support our reinvigorated efforts to promote our NMRA brand throughout the hobby of scale model railroading. The new name makes it crystal clear what and who this publication represents, and that its focus is our organization's and our members' activities and accomplishments.

A 21st century organization

Since the 17-member Board of Trustees was replaced by a nine-member Board of Directors in 2005, the leadership team has had numerous and often intense discussions concerning how to make the NMRA more useful and relevant to the needs of today's model railroading community. That ongoing conversation has made it clear that younger modelers are universally accustomed to sending and receiving information almost instantly via the Internet, World Wide Web, and even texting and Twitter. It's also clear that the most promising demographic group for recruitment into the hobby of scale model railroading and as NMRA members are Baby Boomers, and they, too, are rapidly becoming accustomed to instant online communications.

The NMRA must respond to these trends by showing Boomers and younger modelers alike that there's a place for the NMRA in today's hobby, and a place for today's hobbyist in the NMRA. Now we need to carry that message out to members and non-members alike with both words and accomplishments.

As one means to that end, the BOD recently created the Diamond Club to fund enhancements to our website, nmra.org, so that it is capable of supporting our immediate needs as we move forward into our next 75 years. For example, donations to this fund will provide funding to scan our vast photographic collection now stored at our Headquarters in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Having our photo archives available online to members and researchers means that it will no longer be necessary to travel to Chattanooga to review the entire collection; members around the world can instantly gain access to copies of those images.

We also recognized the need to be able to deliver news about NMRA activities and accomplishments in a much more timely manner, and to have existing, updated, and new Data Sheets available online to members. Moreover, through nmra.org we can share extra images from articles and "NMRA in action" reports that space did not allow us to include in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*.

Going forward, we also plan to share short video clips of members' layouts and modeling projects and virtual tours over layouts still in the planning stages. We are also introducing an "Ask the Masters" section of our website so that members can ask for and receive help from Master Model Railroaders without waiting through the multi-month cycle of a printed publication.

In short, your leadership team is responding enthusiastically to the need for ever-increasing amounts of content to be delivered in a timely, and less expensive, manner via nmra.org. Fortunately, this is occurring as more and more of our senior members are recognizing the benefits of online access, either via personal computers at home or in local libraries or senior centers.

That said, the era of the printed publication and photographic image is not over by a long shot. The NMRA plans to continue to publish a high-quality print magazine for its members. But as that is continuing, we are also working to ensure that the "look and feel" of both our print and our Web deliverables are as identical as we can manage. Both media should have a strong family resemblance.

An overview of branding

In a small organization such as ours, we need for everything we do to convey the same message and image to members, to the hobby of scale model railroading, and to the industry that supports it. Even huge organizations have recognized this need. Consider, for example, the American Association of Retired Persons, which formerly published a monthly magazine called *Modern Maturity*. They recognized that their true brand was AARP, and that to reinforce that brand they should rename their periodical *AARP The Magazine*. The "formal" name of the organization no longer appears anywhere within the pages of their publication, which

is billed as the world's largest circulation magazine. They're AARP. Period.

Despite our formal name, we're proud to be not just a national but a truly international organization. To that end, increased focus on our "short" name — NMRA — is beneficial. Everything we produce from magazines to apparel to conventions should reflect that brand. As you noticed when you picked up this issue of what formerly was called *SCALE RAILS* — a popular name but one that did not reinforce our brand — we have followed the lead of the AARP and other organizations by renaming our periodical *NMRA MAGAZINE*.

The new name also points to the magazine's primary mission, which is to keep NMRA members up to date on our activities and accomplishments. We think of this as coming under the umbrella of "The NMRA in Action!" *NMRA MAGAZINE* is not a general-interest model railroad magazine; that's the province of the commercial magazines that have supported us over the decades. Among them are *Model Railroader*, *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Narrow Gauge & Shortline Gazette*, and *Model Railroad News*. But the magazine will continue to publish outstanding articles about members' layouts and modeling projects as long as they reflect on the value of NMRA membership and member activities.

Going forward, there will be numerous other opportunities for us to use our brand, NMRA (and nmra.org), as the main identifier of our organization. For example, we will ask that National Convention hosts recognize the need to reinforce our brand, NMRA, in the names they select when bidding for a future convention. "NMRA 2099 Metropolis" conveys more information than "Metro 99," for example.

A logo reflecting our mission

Not long after the NMRA was founded in 1935, the NMRA's venerable logo — a coupler superimposed on a steam locomotive driver — was introduced. It has served us well, but it is no longer relevant to an increasing number of model railroaders and potential members who grew up in and model the diesel era. The Board recognized that no era-specific graphic design would improve this situation.

Moreover, the original logo does not evoke thoughts about our primary mission:

2010 August Positioning NMRA For Our Next 75 Years Cont.

to ensure interoperability and compatibility. After consulting with and reviewing design proposals from several railroad-savvy professional graphic designers, we realized that the most obvious and effective graphical representation of our mission is the flanged wheel on the steel rail. It's to the point, not era-specific, graphically clean, and — like the Nike “swoosh” — will be recognizable with or without the brand “NMRA” or “nmra.org,” even when reduced to lapel-pin size.

Your portal to more fun!

During the several years that the re-branding program was being discussed by your leadership team, we looked for a way to suggest that our website, nmra.org, will evolve to be our members' primary portal to the hobby. We noticed that the shape of the lower-case N in the Howard Fat typeface looked like a tunnel portal. Jim Sacco of City Classics, our primary design consultant (he also designed the diamond-shaped 75th anniversary year logo), added a pair of rails curving out of the front to underscore the portal concept.

Our website's new slogan — “Your portal to more fun in scale model railroading!” — underscores the supportive nature of our mission. We'll leave the creation of the basic “fun” level of our hobby to the many publishers, manufacturers, and importers who support scale model railroading; that's too big a task for us to contemplate. But we can band together to ensure that those who support us with their contributions of money, time, and labor have even more fun along the way.

How do we do that? We can accomplish these goals by continuing to provide a forum in which needed Standards and Recommended Practices are discussed with fellow hobbyists and the model railroad industry until a consensus is reached and can be published; by providing grass-roots fellowship during Division and Region activities; by expanding popular programs like Modeling with the Masters and the Achievement Program; and by delivering more content in a more timely manner to members around the world.

Our venerable coupler-in-driver logo will not simply disappear. Now called our “classic” logo, it will continue to be used until existing inventories of products, letterhead, and so on are depleted. Regions and Divisions that have incorporated the coupler-on-driver logo in their own graph-



ics are welcome to continue to use it, but we hope that they will find a way to help us promote our new brand and image by using the wheel-on-rail artwork. Art masters and use guidelines for the new logo for online, print, and product use will be available through Communications Director Gerry Leone.

You're an ambassador!

The NMRA is at a critical juncture. We have adopted a new logo that underscores our extremely important mission. We have a brand that supports a standard look and feel across our entire product line. We are the NMRA!

Now, your officers, directors, and department heads are working diligently to be sure the new brand is much more than a thin façade that masks an organization still steeped in the traditions and expectations of the last century. We won't impress anyone by pointing to proud but increasingly distant past accomplishments. We have to have an inspirational response to the challenge, “But what have you done for me lately?”

We've already begun this exciting journey! Thanks to the leadership of publisher Larry DeYoung and the dedication

of former editor Terry Bacus and current editor Stephen Priest, we can all be proud of our most popular product: this magazine. Information technology manager Tim Klevar and his team have been working with equal diligence to improve our website and create a members-only section where ever-increasing quantities of valuable content will be instantly accessible to members regardless of their location, be they at home, at work, or traveling.

As the leadership team continues to identify and define potential new areas of value while wrestling with the problems inherent in today's tough economy and rapidly changing infrastructure, we need for every member — you! — to acknowledge one simple truth: You are an NMRA ambassador. You'll be reminded of this when you get your next membership card. The true value of membership is in working with other modelers to ensure that they have more fun in their hobby endeavors.

Together, we're moving forward into our second 75 years of service to the hobby we all enjoy so much. Together, we can accomplish almost anything. Together, we are the NMRA. 🚂

2010 August

Peter Youngblood earns Master Model Railroader 433.

2010 September 75th Milwaukee Convention Report Part 01

The Milwaukee 75th Anniversary Convention was as big an event as we expected it to be. So much happened that there's no way I can fit it all into one report. I'll do what I can this month, then I'll be back with more next time.

Bob Keune – Present at the creation

One of my most rewarding duties as NMRA President is to represent the organization in a number of interesting and challenging venues. I also get an opportunity to meet a many interesting and sometimes famous people. Have I mentioned that I was kissed at the banquet last year by Susan Saint James?

This year I was thrilled and privileged to meet Mr. Robert D. Keune of Milwaukee, who as far as we have been able to determine is the last surviving Charter Member of the NMRA. Bob, who I believe is 92 years old, is as sharp and active as many a man half his age, and is still model railroading. He spent his convention working in the registration booth, and was a constant and active participant in the events of the convention.

I had the opportunity to meet Bob, along with his friend Marie, at the banquet, and we had a very interesting visit. It turns out that he was not allowed to attend the actual first business meeting of the NMRA because he was not yet 18 years old! I guess he made up for it by being the only one of the organizers to attend the 75th.

After the banquet, Bob and I exchanged email addresses. Yes, he's something of a webhead at 92! If any of you are interested in renewing acquaintances with Bob, just send him an email at my address and I'll forward it on to him.

The first business meeting

Terry Thompson, publisher of *Model Railroader*, made a special presentation of

a recently rediscovered photo of the first business meeting of the NMRA. It was exciting and humbling to see those faces, some famous and some not so famous, as they peered across 75 years into a future that they made possible but would not live to see. The photo will occupy a place of honor in the lobby of NMRA Headquarters in Chattanooga. Thanks, Terry and Kalmbach, for your thoughtfulness.

Milwaukee 2010 Awards

It's an honor and a pleasure each year to lead the recognition of some of the great people who have given an extraordinary amount of their time and abilities to the NMRA and the hobby. Here is a list of awards presented at the 2010 Milwaukee 75th Anniversary banquet:

Meritorious Service Awards

These persons are nominated by the heads of the departments in which they serve.

Ed McCaney, for work in the Track and Wheel area of the Standards and Conformance Department over the past ten years.

Ken West, who has served as the head of DCC decoder testing for the Standards and Conformance Department for many years.

President's Awards

Each year the president is able to recognize some of those who have made it possible for the day-to-day work of the NMRA to be carried out. Some of these individuals serve directly under the president as managers or committee chairs, performing their duties on a continuing basis. Others have performed a specific service over a more



NMRA President Mike Brestel

closely defined period of time. The names of those honored this year appear here in alphabetical order.

Robert J. Amsler, Jr., for his work with the Union Pacific Steam Program; his efforts in the development area; his work as Legal Counsel; and, fool that he is, his acceptance of new duties as the new Meetings & Trade Shows Manager.

Chuck Diljak, for his work with the Membership Services and Promotion Department, with the NMRA InfoNet, the NMRA Editors and Region and Division Officers distribution lists, and for content development in the coming nmra.org "Members Only" section.

Miles Hale, MMR, for his service as Western District Director from 2007 to 2010.

Gerry Leone, MMR, for his work as the NMRA Communications Director, as well as advertising preparation, copywriting, supervision of the NMRA InfoNet, Membership Promotion, and a thousand other creative tasks that no one else can or desires to take on.

Eric Lundberg, HLM, MMR, for his continuing work as the Pioneer Committee calligrapher since his retirement as NMRA President.

Allen Pollock, HLM, DSA, for service above and beyond the call as NMRA Vice President over the past three years, his continuing work as Industry Liaison, and for myriad other tasks and responsibilities, both known and unknown, seen and unseen.

Jim Sacco, for his graphic design work over the past decade, especially his work on

2010 September 75th Milwaukee Convention Report Part 01 Cont.

the Diamond Club and the NMRA logo and branding committees.

Honors Committee Awards

The Honors committee is chaired by former president Allen Pollock. The names of the rest of the committee members remain confidential in order to preserve the independence of the committee and to discourage lobbying.

Fellow of the NMRA

Recipients of this award are suggested to the Honors Committee by their region, and exemplify the spirit of giving and fellowship so valued in the NMRA.

Len Firth – Len has held offices in the British Region and participated in various activities from 1952 to 2004, taking time out from serving as Treasurer for this entire time period to serve terms as Secretary, Vice President, and President. He has been involved in almost every activity offered by the British Region. He is the recipient of several awards from the British Region, and received a President's Award in 1966.

Distinguished Service Awards

The DSA is presented to persons who have provided service not just to the NMRA, but who have affected or materially advanced the hobby of model railroading.

Aubrey Olsen – For his contributions to the advancement of model railroad operations. Aubrey developed economical and effective ground turnout throws that, along with walkaround command control, revolutionized layout operations. These ground throws, as well as many other products in many scales, are still offered today by his company, Caboose Industries.

Stan Ames – In 1992, Stan met Bernd Lenz, who had developed a new digital command control system. Stan made several trips to Europe at his own expense to work with a group to establish a standard for digital command control, which became known as DCC. That pioneering group included the manufacturers Lenz,

Wangrow, and Digitrax, as well as other electronics engineers and hobbyists, including Rutger Friberg, Mike Green, and Dick Lord. This group agreed on the basis for a standard, and in 1994 the standard was adopted by the NMRA, to the benefit of countless model railroaders around the world over the past 16 years.

Honorary Life Memberships

The HLM is presented to persons who have provided extraordinary service to the NMRA.

Rutger Friberg – For his work in the field of DCC. Rutger was part of the early group to meet and push for standardization in digital command control that eventually led to the DCC Working Group and the NMRA DCC Standards.

Rutger also served as Chair of the Standards & Conformance Committee, and created and implemented the highly successful Junior College or Junior Clinics Program, first in Europe and then in the USA.

Robert "Bob" Brown – Long-time editor of *The Narrow Gauge & Short Line Gazette*, which presents the finest modeling in North America. Prior to the *Gazette*, Bob published *Finelines*, which first introduced modeling of this standard to a large audience. Bob continues his support of NMRA today in the pages of the *Gazette*, and with his contributions in the development of the Howell Day Museum.

To be continued...

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'M' and a cursive 'ike'.

2010 September

Floyd Brittian earns Master Model Railroader 435.

October 2010 **The NEW LOGO** and Milwaukee Report Part 02

This logo business

I've been getting a lot of mail about our new logo since it debuted in Milwaukee in July. The mail has been pretty evenly divided, pro and con. I have appreciated the thoughtfulness of most of the letters I've received, whether they were for or against.

Some of the con letters have been, shall we say, a little overwrought, and that's gotten me thinking about logos — not about the mechanics of logo design, but about specific logos that I like and don't like, and what they mean to me. I've been considering products that have logos I like — Ford, GE, and EMD come to mind, as well as products that I know are good that have logos that don't appeal to me — Toyota, Subaru, and Hyundai are some examples.

I've been asking myself whether I really care that Toyota has a logo that looks like a sombrero. Does my opinion of Toyota automobiles change because I don't relate to their logo? I've decided that no, I don't care what their logo looks like. Toyota builds a good car regardless of what piece of chrome they glue on the trunk. And when I bought a Ford last year, I didn't really care that they put that little blue oval on the grille.

Now I have a confession to make: I've never been a big fan of the old NMRA wheel-and-coupler logo — or as I've heard it described more than once, the “wheel and wrench.” But it has never been a big deal to me. When I joined the NMRA in 1966, I didn't join a logo. I joined an organization that set standards, held conventions and division meetings, and hosted clinics, layout tours, and other events. I joined for knowledge and fellowship, and I joined because the modelers I admired were active NMRA members.

Forty-four years later, I'm still a member for the same reasons. My efforts as a volunteer are in response to the incredible world of model railroading that has been given to me over nearly half a century.

I didn't join because of a logo, and I'm not going to stay or leave because of a logo. It's not about the logo, it's about the people of the NMRA — the modelers I've met, the layouts I've visited, the articles I've read, the help I've received and given, and so on. And it's about what our members have done in

the past, what we're doing now, and what we're going to accomplish in the future.

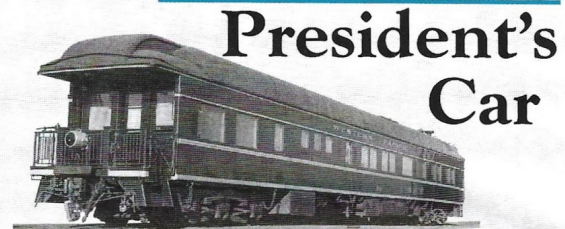
The members are why we changed the name of the magazine, too. We want the name of the magazine to reflect the fact that it's about more than just scale rails, it's about railroaders, the NMRA and its members — what we're doing, what we're modeling, what we're thinking. We want to publish the best possible magazine about the NMRA and our members' interests and pursuits. We can never be *Model Railroader*, and we don't want to set up that expectation.

So yes, I've been getting a lot of mail, and I've been getting flak in some of it, but I've been getting lots of letters of support as well, and most of the people I've talked to since July have been supportive of the changes. It seems that no matter what we do, about half the mail is for it and half is against it. Since I'm going to get mail either way, I figure I might as well do the best job I can for the organization, using the skills and knowledge I've gained over 50 years in the hobby and serving the NMRA and other non-profits. I know the board, the officers, and the national volunteers feel the same way. We'll see how it all works out.

Member benefits at a glance

Sometimes members (and even non-members) will ask, “Exactly what are all the benefits I get with my NMRA membership?” While it's easy to rattle off a handful, it's a little harder to list them all, because there are so many of them. And even though they're all listed on our webpage, they're scattered throughout dozens of pages, too.

Communications Director Gerry Leone noticed this, too, and assembled a very comprehensive Member Benefits Grid, which you'll find in this issue. The grid lists the benefit, explains what it is, and then tells you where to find it or whom to contact for more information about it. To the best of our knowledge, it's the first time a comprehensive listing of NMRA member benefits has ever been assembled in one, easily ref-



NMRA President Mike Brestel

erenced place. It's such a great reminder of what you get for your dues money that we'll be re-running the matrix periodically here in *NMRA MAGAZINE*.

You might want to make some copies of this grid. Then you can pull it out the next time a non-member buddy or a prospective member asks you, “Just what do I get when I join the NMRA, anyway?”

We want to be there when you need us

Although the Kalmbach Memorial Library (KML) is listed on the grid, one of the neat sub-benefits of the KML that's not specifically called out is the photographs and other images you'll soon be able to download, thanks to your contributions to the Diamond Club. Scanning has started, and pretty soon you'll be able to visit the KML collection without even leaving your home. More on this will appear next month.

You've read about our continuing efforts to drive member benefits down to the regional and divisional levels. With the coming availability of the KML on the Web, as well as the introduction and expansion of our members-only on-line services, we're working to make the NMRA available where and when you need us — even if you're sitting on your couch, using your laptop at 3AM!

Milwaukee report, part two President's Award

Somehow I left out one President's Award winner last month, and I want to correct that oversight right away.

James “Lumpy” Lupfer, for his excellent work in setting up the History of Model Railroading exhibit at the Milwaukee 75th Anniversary Convention. Jim enthusiastically accepted this daunting task in

Hartford in 2009 after being volunteered by then-Vice President Allen Pollock. In retrospect, he was the obvious choice to work with the manufacturers to bring this exhibit together. As the assistant head of the National Train Show, he works one-on-one with the manufacturers to make sure their stay at the train show is as pleasant and incident-free as possible, and over the years he has built cordial relationships with many of our industry friends. As a collector himself, he has a respect for the value and importance of our hobby's heritage.

Jim took to the exhibit assignment with enthusiasm, soliciting historic models for display, contributions to help defray the expenses of the exhibit, and donations in-kind such as the exhibit signage from some of the manufacturers. The exhibit was a triumph and a delight to visit, as I am sure any Milwaukee visitor will agree. Jim's work on this once-in-a-lifetime project was exemplary, and I am pleased to be able present him with this much-deserved award.

It occurs to me that the Milwaukee exhibit deserved to be seen by our entire membership. Since it was a one-time event, that's not possible, but maybe it **would be** possible to put together an article **about** the display. Hey, Lumpy...

Pioneer Awards

This award is presented to modelers and members of the model railroad industry who have had an extraordinary affect on the hobby over the years. The recipients are selected by the Pioneer Committee, which until last year was chaired by the late Hal Carstens. I am pleased to announce that replacing Hal on the committee (as much as anyone can) are his wife, Phyllis Carstens, and Tony Koester.

Leo and Ruth Campbell — Leo is well-known as the long-time owner of Campbell Scale Models. Along with his wife, Ruth, Leo set the standard in the 1960s and 1970s for high quality but affordable craftsman kits in HO. While most of the structures were wood-based, Leo also was an early user of styrene detail parts. He also manufactured the Weston line of HO metal figures for many years.

Bernd Lenz — Bernd is the father of DCC command control, and gave a great gift to the hobby through the donation of his DCC patents to the NMRA. He continues to operate the highly regarded Lenz Elektronik GMBH in Germany.

W. Allen McClelland — Allen introduced modern model railroad operations and layout design to the hobby, having originated or popularized such practices as prototype-based freelancing, the "beyond the basement" concept, freight car forwarding systems, command control, walkaround control, "good enough" construction and detailing, and many of the other precepts upon which the modern hobby is based.

For more than 40 years, Allen has traveled the world in support of model railroading and the NMRA. Articles and photos of the famous Virginian & Ohio Railroad have appeared in *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Model Railroader*, *SCALE RAILS*, and the *BULLETIN*, and many other publications. Allen and the V&O have also been featured in several full-length videos showing the railroad and introducing generations of model railroaders to his concepts and his exceptional modeling. In his spare time, Allen served as Mid Central Region President and Trustee, as well as in a number of other NMRA offices and positions.

See you in the future

As I look at this month's column, I'm struck that despite the varied content, the column is united by one theme: the contributions of the membership that have shaped our past and our present. It's what we're doing now that will make the NMRA and the hobby what it will be in the future. Let's not get hung up on the inconsequential. Let's collectively try to stay focused on where we want to be in ten, 25, or 75 years, and let's consider how we're going to get there.



2010 October

Benton (Ben) Bartlett earned Master Model Railroader 434.

Monte Hofmann earned Master Model Railroader 443.

Mark Preussler earned Master Model Railroader 442, meaning he and his brother Marvin become the 2nd set of MMR brothers.



The above photo taken in 1998 taken by the Preusslers' father



Don Manlick, MMR #56 and the most recent MMR from the Winnebagoland Division, Marvin Preussler, MMR #432.

CHECK OUT THE DIFFERENCE IN MMR PLAQUES 56 to 432!

2010 November

Ron Lane (Central Indiana Division) earned Master Model Railroader 447. Ron wrote in his bio:

"I may have earned the dubious distinction of having the longest elapsed time between my first AP Certificate and MMR, 48 years, just one short of the 49 year history of the Achievement Program!" [Note: Ron moved multiple times in his AP Journey]

2010 December

Announced that the British Region is celebrating its 65th anniversary.

The RailPass retention rate is 65%.

Brad Sloan earns Master Model Railroader 437.

2011 January

Moving - Forward

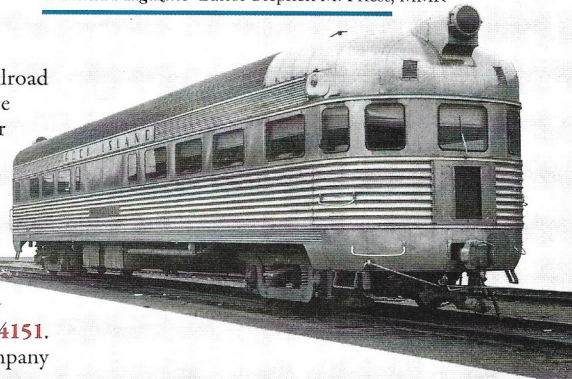
As some of you already know, Paired Rail Railroad Publications, Ltd. will be moving from our office space to our recently remodeled home studio. Our lease at 5106 NW Waukomis is up and we will not be renewing it because we are contemplating a move in the next few years. We hope with that move comes a very large basement!

If you are planning on writing an article, sending a letter to the editor, or forwarding us a model to photograph or build, after December 15 please use our new address: **5729 North Delta Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64151**. All e-mail addresses, the FTP site, and PRRP, Ltd. company phone numbers will remain as they are now.

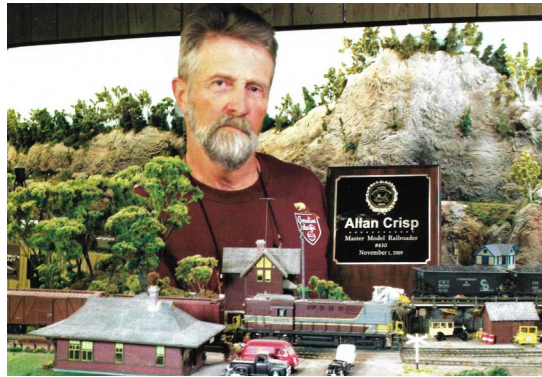
Speaking of articles, get out your pencils and digital cameras and send us some. The *NMRA MAGAZINE* is always in need of fresh articles that further the mission of the NMRA. Are you working on a AP certificate? Write about your experience. Are you planning an NMRA event? Write about helpful hints and pitfalls to avoid in doing so. Are you mentoring other modelers? Write about it. The *NMRA MAGAZINE* is seeking articles that definitely have an "NMRA hook." We want to promote the

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



NMRA, its members, and mission as best we can, but we need your help to do it. Send in your articles today!



2011 January President's Column by Mike Brestel

Department of Corrections

Last month, I mentioned that the Pacific Northwest Region had made a substantial and welcome donation to the Diamond Club, to be used for scanning material from our library collection. Somehow in my comments and expression of gratitude I managed to make a very embarrassing mistake.

I confused the name of PNR President Walt Huston, who wrote the letter challenging other NMRA Regions and Divisions to make similar Diamond Club gifts, with the name of Jack Watson, who is the president of the North Central Region.

I know both these gentlemen, and there's really no reason for me to confuse them. I've been looking around desperately, trying to find someone or something to blame this on, but no luck. This mistake is mine alone.

I'm sorry, Walt and Jack, for getting your names confused. At least this correction gives me the opportunity to repeat our thanks to each of you, as well as to the rest of the leadership and the membership of your regions, for your generous gifts of \$1,000 each to the Diamond Club.

National Model Railroad Month

Many of you will remember that for many years, November has been National Model Railroad Month in the U.S. This is one reason why so many shows and open houses are traditionally held during November. When I was a young model rail-

roader, there was a lot of talk about how to promote the hobby during the month. My Division first began holding its annual model railroad show during November because we wanted to contribute to and coordinate with National Model Railroad Month.

When you think about it, November is really an ideal time for this kind of activity, situated as it is just before the bad weather sets in over much of the Northern Hemisphere, and only a short time before Christmas.

In recent years, we haven't heard very much about National Model Railroad Month as a formal, scheduled event. I really don't know why that is, since so many groups still work to promote the hobby during November.

Someone even came up to me during my Division's annual show last month and asked me why we don't celebrate National Model Railroad Month any more. I replied, "Isn't that why we're here this weekend?" But he was right in one sense. We don't create the kind of hoopla over the month that we once did.

This year, I received several e-mails asking why the NMRA is not promoting National Model Railroad Month the way it once did. The answer comes down to the usual reasons: lack of money and lack of volunteers.

It is quite expensive to put on a national marketing campaign, and we wouldn't be able to afford one unless we were to raise everyone's dues — a WHOLE lot! Marketing

to the general public is something that is just beyond our means, and it might even be beyond the means of the entire scale model railroad industry.

The volunteer question, however, is another matter entirely. There is no reason why a group of NMRA volunteers could not coordinate a National Model Railroad Month campaign that would be carried out by Divisions and clubs around the U.S., even around the world. Small groups could market the month locally at a tiny fraction of the cost of a national or international campaign.

All we need to make this happen is — you guessed it — volunteers. Pretty much everyone I know personally is volunteered out. I've tapped everyone I can think of to do one job or another, sometimes several jobs, in the NMRA. There are people I've known in the hobby for years who now run the other way when they see me approach.

But I know there are members around the NMRA who have a passion for the hobby, and are full of ideas and enthusiasm. I know that all we need to make National Model Railroad Month into the kind of celebration it can be is — YOU!

If you're wondering why "they" don't do something about National Model Railroad Month, or if you're interested in doing something yourself to revitalize this once-vibrant celebration of the hobby, send me or Communications Director Gerry Leone a note. Our addresses are in this and every issue of the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, and are

2011 January President's Column **JIM GIBSON PASSES AWAY**

also available at nmra.org. You can also look for the "NMRA Wants You" ad running in this issue for other volunteer opportunities.

Now's the time to start planning for next year. We'll look forward to hearing from you!

Death of an SER pioneer: Jim Gibson, 1923 – 2010

I received a letter recently from Joe Gamble of Birmingham, Alabama. Joe and I served together on the old Board of Trustees in the 1990s. Joe was from the Southeastern Region and I was from the Mid Central. Joe wanted to let us know about the recent death of a pillar of the Southeastern Region, Jim Gibson.

Joe sent along a summary of Jim's contributions to the NMRA and the SER:

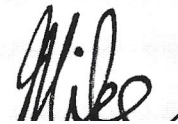
James T. Gibson died September 18, 2010, at the age of 87. He was one of the group that reestablished the Southeastern Region in 1960. He served as region president from 1961 to 1964; as director and editor of the SouthErneR (the region newsletter) for years; as region convention chair in 1961, 1966, and 1974; and as NMRA Southern Area Vice President in the 1970s.

In 1981, the SER directors established the Vern Yarbrough Award for outstanding service to the region, and Jim was the first recipient. He built a legendary 40x50-

foot layout, and he and friends operated it regularly. The layout was on the tours during the 1988 National Convention, and during the Regional conventions in 1986, 1994, 2004, and 2010.

Joe sent along an article written by Robert Hunt that appeared in the *SouthErneR* and celebrated Jim's life and contributions. Robert reports that Jim served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He was active in many civic organizations, and as owner and operator of the Gibson Sheet Metal Works in Bessemer, Alabama, he supplied parts for Southern Railway Mikado 4501 when it was first rehabilitated for fan trip service. In addition, he supplied the boiler jacketing during the rebuilding of Chesapeake & Ohio Kanahwa 2716 for Southern Ry. fan trips. Jim also coordinated numerous fan trips over the years for the Heart of Dixie Railroad Club.

To quote Robert: *Jim was a mentor, a teacher, and a friend to all model railroaders who sought his advice and counsel. He served the Lord and the community for 87 years. He reached out and enriched the lives of all who have had the pleasure of knowing him.*



2011 February

Rich Dobler earns Master Model Railroader 441.

John Brown earns Master Model Railroader 449.

The Legendary Dean Freytag Passes Away

Dean A. Freytag, 1924–2010

On December 26, I received the sad news that Dean Freytag, known throughout the hobby as a pioneer in the use of styrene, a leading authority on modeling the steel-making industry, and a champion of the NMRA, passed away on Christmas Day in Ashland, Ohio.

One of Dean's railroad buddies, Bill Linson of the MCoR, wrote a fitting and eloquent tribute to Dean, and with Bill's permission I'm sharing it here with you:

Flags are flying at half-staff today over model railroads throughout Ohio and beyond, mourning the passing of model railroad legend Dean Freytag.

Freytag, 86, passed away Christmas night at the assisted living facility in Ashland, OH, where he had resided for the past 11 months. He leaves a sister, Carol, a brother-in-law, Jim, and a niece and nephew. He was preceded in death by wife Ann Elizabeth (Davies) in 1999.

Dean had four loves in his life. In no particular order, they were Ann, railroading, steel mills, and Ashland University. It is to the latter he left most of his estate, being honored with the grandstands in their new football stadium being named in his and Ann's honor. He was a lifetime member of the NMRA, a Master Model Railroader, and the national contest chair for that organization for a number of years. Interestingly, he never attended Ashland University, never worked on a railroad, refused to ride on the trains, calling them rough-riding and dusty, and never ever worked in a steel mill.

But he probably knew more about the steel-making processes than many who did work in the industry. He was a prolific modeler of all things about railroading, but especially steel mills. Indeed, it was steel that dominated the 13x38-foot main room of his HO model railroad. His models of the various components of the steel mills that dominated the landscape in what he called the "Ruhr Valley of the United States" — that section of the country between Cleveland and Pittsburgh — are the prototypes

for the Walther's series of steel-making structures used by modelers throughout the world.

Dean was an author of at least two books used extensively in modeling. The Cyclopedia of Industrial Modeling and The History, Making & Modeling of Steel, and his "how to" articles appeared in the modeling press frequently over the past 50 years. He was published in Model Railroader more than 50 times. His manuscripts were "banged out" — literally — in all caps on a manual typewriter, as were his letters, notes, and even postcards.

Dean was a proponent of working with



Above: Dean Freytag joins the V&O operating crew for Allen McClelland's retirement dinner, June 1999, Miamisburg, Ohio. Back row, left to right: Brad McClelland, Dale Waddell, Wes Reece, Kurt Marshall, Mike Brestel. Middle row: Bill Ford, Jim Slaughter, John Roberts, Frank Koch, Merv Hardman. Front row: Jim Rhinehart, Allen McClelland, Dean Freytag. — Photo by Mary Brestel

styrene — he was featured in an instructional video about styrene and Plastruct shapes, and virtually everything he built was from scratch and/or kit bashed. He seldom, if ever, felt the structural "iron work" of bridge and industry models was heavy enough and nearly always beefed them up with his beloved Plastruct components. His modeling transcended craftsmanship into art. His discerning eye saw a steel mill ladle in the discarded cap from a whiskey bottle, the conveyor belt rollers in the used throw-away razor blade guards, and literally dozens of other such applications. Not always the most patient of teachers, he nevertheless was a mentor to dozens — maybe even hundreds — of modelers, and to listen to and learn from Dean was to learn from a master.

President's Car



NMRA President Mike Brestel

Not to think he was one- or two-dimensional. Dean was a avid reader of war novels, particularly about World War II, in which he served — and was deeply interested in Civil War history, having visited the battlefields on numerous occasions. He wore out two exercycles, putting thousands of miles on each of them as he watched the Cleveland Browns and Cleveland Cavaliers. He always had cats that were given railroad names, e.g. Smokey, Cinders, and Chessie.

Dean spent a lot of time on the telephone with modeling friends all over the country discussing myriad topics, but usually related to railroading. It was Dean Freytag who put train watching into perspective when he once said to someone questioning the time spent, "I'm with friends who share interests, we're sitting outside in lovely weather, and when there aren't trains going by, we discuss the world, the economy, football, and all sorts of things."

The lights are dimmed on Dean Freytag's South Ridge Lines, and fires are out at his Davies Steel complex. Model railroading has lost an icon, and I have lost a friend.

Since word of Dean's death has made its way around the world, I have received a number of tributes to his life and work, several of which I'd like to share here:

Dean was an active member of MCR Division 6 when I first started attending meetings in 1979. I knew who Dean was because of articles and pictures featuring his work that had been in MR over the 1960s and 1970s. Dean was one of the first to welcome me at the meeting and you could have knocked me over with a feather. Dean Freytag was talking to me!

The Legendary Dean Freytag Passes Away Cont.

Division 6 used to have a model contest at every meeting with two classes: novice and expert. At my second meeting I entered a flat-car in the novice class. Dean was the judge and much to my surprise, I won the novice contest. Dean congratulated me and after the meeting, took me aside and personally explained how to improve the model. I was just blown away.

Dean became a friend and it was always nice to see him. After I moved from Ohio in 1985, I didn't see Dean as often, but he never forgot me. He always knew me by name when we met at a regional or National Convention. For many years, at the National Convention, Dean would set up a table in a hallway near the clinic rooms, build models, and talk to those who passed by. It was always a highlight of a National Convention for me to stop and talk to Dean. I will surely miss him.

—Dave Thornton, NMRA VP-Administration

Dean once sent me a bright-orange Atlas SD24 that he and Ray Miller had detailed. The engine was marked only with the initials of Miller-Freytag Engineering, or "MFE," in very large letters. Of course, you can guess how fast the Midland Road's crew came up with another version of what MFE stood for.

So I happened to have one of the horrible brass cabooses imported from Korea (before Korea knew how to build brass models) by NorthWest Short Line in their Far East Distributors series. It was anything but square with parts and walls leaning this way and that, and it had been factory-dipped in orange paint, complete with runs and fingerprints. Those cabooses became sort of a cult item.

Naturally, I labeled it "MFC 69" and used it behind the MFE. As I recall, Dean didn't think the joke was all that funny.

—Tony Koester, NMRA ALWW Director

I was saddened this morning to learn of the passing of Dean Freytag. I got to know Dean fairly well during my volunteering days within the Gold Old Boys Club. We must all leave sometime but it is always difficult for those left behind to realize such a friend is no longer there to help and inspire us.

I received a simple post card from Dean a number of years ago upon completing my

volunteer service in the NMRA. I would like to return his compliment at this sad moment: Dean, "You done good."

—Eric Lundberg, NMRA Past President

As a fellow MCR member and a "neighbor" in Ashland, Ohio, Dean was a friend for nearly 40 years. He was a tremendous friend to my region and division. Once a year he would travel to Cincinnati to present a clinic on his latest modeling tips and experiences. After he was no longer able to drive the 200 miles himself, he enlisted one of his friends to bring him down. Before the start of the meeting I was usually assigned to take them to lunch, which was always an enjoyable and memorable experience.

It was hard to witness his decline over the past five years or so, but he kept busy doing what he loved doing until early in 2010. Up until fairly recently, he would call with news, gossip, and advice on how to run the NMRA. He began every conversation by asking after my wife and daughter, and was genuinely interested in the reply.

As much as he loved trains, steel, and modeling, he loved relationships the most. You've heard the saying that no man is poor who has friends, and by that criterion, Dean was rich indeed. His friendships spanned the world.

By any measure, Dean was a giant. We will miss him indeed.

I have no doubt that the memorials, testimonials, and tributes to Dean will continue to pour in. I hope that we'll be able to devote space to a number of them in a future issue of *NMRA MAGAZINE*.

Memorials

In response to requests, we have set up a special account for memorial gifts made in Dean's memory. Please designate any gift for that purpose to the Dean A. Freytag Memorial Fund, and the office staff will take care of the rest.



2011 March President's Car

A letter from a donor

Those of you who live in the United States received my annual donation appeal letter just before Christmas last year. Usually it comes out early in the year, but it was delayed until late in 2010 because of the year-long Diamond Club campaign.

Now, I feel the same about appeal letters as most of you probably do — I can live without them. But I don't mind writing the annual NMRA letter because I believe in the work the NMRA does, and I'm proud of the effort we have made over the past decade or so to rebuild the organization's finances and credibility. And I believe that we all, especially those of us who are non-actuarial Life Members, need to do our part in contributing whatever we can — in dollars or in sweat equity — to be sure that the NMRA is here for the hobby and the hobbyists of the future.

On the other hand, I know firsthand how difficult the world's economy has been over the past couple of years and I was really worried about the response this my letter would receive. So I was particularly pleased to receive the following letter:

Dear Mike,

I got your solicitation letter today. Because I am one of the long-term unemployed, my first reaction was to write to say I could not contribute as I had in the past. I was even drafting an e-mail to you. Then I stopped.

As a Life Member, I am receiving benefits that are not covered because money was pulled from the Life Member reserve in the past. For a variety of reasons, I'm only modestly involved in our local Division and some joint Region-SIG events. But I think the NMRA has done an extraordinary job over the years bringing members, experts, manufacturers, and others to create Standards and Recommended Practices.

The recent multi-party effort organized by NMRA to defeat that bogus patent claim on locomotive sound was something that probably only the NMRA could have

fostered. Again, bringing together hobbyists, manufacturers, experts, and others probably would have never succeeded without the NMRA leadership and commitment.

And the current activities of NMRA — digitizing our library, fashioning an agreement to create a first class Model Railroading museum, broadening our reach by engaging with SIGs — promise to yield more benefits.

So, I decided that I could contribute at least something, especially since I get these and other benefits "free." I've enclosed a smaller check than I would like, but hope it helps.

[name withheld by request]

Thanks to the writer for this letter, which really hits the nail on the head: If the NMRA wasn't doing these things, who would, or even could?

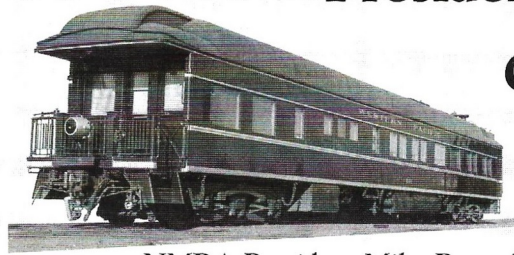
We've been pleased with our members' general response to my appeal. We should have an accounting for you next month, but consider these an early thanks for your support, both financial and otherwise. It's very appreciated.

New directions, new volunteers

As I mentioned earlier in this column, the NMRA depends upon more than financial support from our members. If not for the tremendous number of volunteer hours contributed by members all over the world, the money we receive would make little difference. The money helps, but it is people who do the work.

As you know, we've been working to expand our presence in several increasingly popular areas, especially on the World-Wide Web. Our IT Department, under Tim Klevar, has been involved in several new ventures, some of which have either just come online, or will be coming online in the very near future.

We are quite close to having our new Members-Only website open. It will in-



NMRA President Mike Brestel

President's Car

clude some exciting new features, including the NMRA@Home, a collection of worthwhile and interesting articles from past issues of our publications; a Data Sheet section, including both new and reworked older Data Sheets; the new NMRA Online Archives; and more. (Please be sure to read Gerry Leone's update of our Diamond Club archive project elsewhere in this issue.)

Since our current web crew is pretty busy doing what they already do, it became obvious that we need some more skilled and enthusiastic volunteers to help with these new efforts. So we've been running a Help Wanted ad in each issue of the magazine for the past several months.

Guess what: It's working! We've picked up several new volunteers in just the past few weeks, and these members are already pitching in to bring more value and content to your NMRA membership. Here are short introductions of our newest team members:

M. David Johnson, Data Sheet Program Manager: Dave is a retired electrical engineer and IT director. He's a life member of the NMRA and serves on the Midwest Region nominating committee and on the Fox Valley Division's High Wheeler Train Show committee. He was the Achievement Program Coordinator for the North Shore & Western Division until it merged into Fox Valley last year. He holds the Volunteer and Chief Dispatcher Achievement Program certificates. Dave models in HO, proto-freelancing small parts of the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe along the California coast. But he says he's really never met a railroad he hasn't liked. Dave and his wife Heather live in the

2011 March President's Car Cont.

Chicago area. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Van Fehr, Data Sheet Program Asst. Manager: Van is a retired aerospace engineer. For part of his career, he was responsible for developing, editing, and documenting proprietary "best practices" in his technical specialties, and their online deployment on his company's internal web. Looking at the NMRA Standards, Recommended Practices and Data Sheets, Van sees similarities to his professional "best practices" work and expects to apply his experience helping revitalize the Data Sheet program. He is the author of an article on easements appearing in *Model Railroad Planning 2011*, and is currently planning a prototype-freelanced HO scale railroad set in the late steam era. Van and wife Sara live in Connecticut.

Gary Huff, National Model Railroad Month: Gary is a graphic designer who was born and raised in Winchester, Virginia. In high school he took a correspondence course that taught him a lot about color, composition, and the aspects of being a good artist. After high school, and four years in the Navy, he went to VCU in Richmond and took instruction in graphic design under some of the best. Upon graduation Gary worked in ad agencies and art studios, and currently now has his own studio with a Large Scale railroad running around the ceiling while he works. His other layout is HO and he has been a member of NMRA for little less than a year.

John Sing, Social Networking: John is an Executive IT Consultant with IBM Systems and Technology Group, with specialties in large scale storage, IT Strategy, High Availability and Business Continuity. He joined the NMRA in 2005, and is PCR Coast Division Model Contest Chair and Webmaster.

For the X2011 West Convention Committee, John is the online Social Networking (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) coordinator. The goal of these efforts is reach out to a rapidly growing community of online-savvy model railroaders, by making the 2011 National Convention vis-

ible to a worldwide audience. John says, "We're very successful so far. Check us out at <http://facebook.com/x2011west>."

Ken Liesse, Social Networking: Ken has been a life member since his 16th birthday and comes from a well-known family in the NMRA. He has served as an auctioneer for the Coast Division of PCR and as a 4th Division Director in the PNR. Ken also served on the 2004 Convention Committee in Seattle, in charge of housing and signage. He holds certificates for Volunteer and Dispatcher in the Achievement Program.

In addition to his NMRA activities, Ken is also a volunteer Trainman at the Northwest Railway Museum and lends his voice and writing talent to the American Radio Theater in Seattle.

Ken Mattern, Pike Registry: Ken is a software developer and IT consultant for the Department of Defense in Huntsville, Alabama. He has been developing software systems for business, industry and defense for over 30 years. A contributing writer for trade magazines, he has discussed the fundamentals of eBook making, asset management, automated software delivery, and a host of other applications. His current tasks include configuration management and systems management. He recently became involved in Windows Phone 7 application development through his own company, Elegant Solutions Software and Publishing Company, LLC. Ken models in N scale and lives in Huntsville, Alabama, with his wife, Miae, and stepson, Jamie. Ken will be moving an expanded Pike Registry to a new and more useful site within the Members-Only website in the near future.

Welcome, gentlemen! I know from your e-mails that you're all already hard at work, and we all look forward to seeing the fruits of your labor in the near future!



2011 March **NMRA ONLINE ARCHIVES ARE UP & RUNNING!**

Exciting Announcements!

I have two milestone events I wish to share with all of you. First, the NMRA Online Archives will be up and running for members and non-members alike. The URL is (<http://archive.nmra.org/Home.aspx>). This amazing site features drawings, photographs, and plans scanned from the NMRA library in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and represents many eras, railroads, and locations. I am particularly enamored with the idea of online archives because it is a way for all members to have unfettered access to the treasure that resides at our headquarters. At last you do not have to live close to the library to take advantage of the photographs and drawings materials housed there. A small fee will allow you to download your selected materials right to your computer's desktop any time you wish! As your editor, this excites me because you all now have access to materials to help build models and create articles.

Secondly, I am thrilled to announce that *Model Railroad News* (<http://www.modelrailroadnews.com/>) has agreed to start adding NMRA Conformance and Inspection testing as part of its model reviews in the future. This means that *MRN's* very dedicated and highly skilled reviewers will regularly inspect models for coupler height, weight, wheel gauge, wiring, DCC installation,

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



and other NMRA specified tolerances per the NMRA's published Standards and Recommended Practices. Their efforts will allow a greater number of models to be tested each month. The end result of the increased number of models reviewed is a renewed effort to work with manufacturers to enhance interoperability. This is a win-win for both model manufacturers and modelers. The staff at *Model Railroad News* will be working with the C&I group within the Standards & Conformance Department under Manager Didrik Voss, MMR to learn the requirements necessary to perform C&I reviews. The paperwork will be created by the *MRN* reviewers and then sent to the NMRA for certification.

I wish to personally thank *MRN* Publisher Mike Lindsay and the staff at *Model Railroad News* for their efforts to get this program underway.

2011 March

Roger Nulton earned Master Model Railroader 445.

2011 April

Announced in the Bulletin that this is the 50th Anniversary of the Achievement Program. Some claimed at the beginning that it would never last.

Diamond Club: it's all good news!

When I returned home on February 25 after a week in Las Vegas for the NMRA Mid-year (winter) meetings, I found a thick envelope in my mail pile. Inside was a letter from George Youst, the president of the Northeastern Region. Here's what it said:

Dear Mike: The Northeastern Region decided to accept the challenge of the other regions to donate to the Diamond Club Fund. We feel that it is an extremely worthwhile cause and that many NMRA members will benefit from its content. I decided to make it a true region donation by including the active Divisions of the NER.

The NER Board of Directors decided to donate \$750 to the Diamond Club on behalf of the Region, its Divisions, and its general membership. But I decided to challenge our Divisions to donate an additional \$75 each in the hope that as a group they would match the \$750 from the NER BOD.

I am proud to say that not only did they match our \$750, they surpassed it! Eight of our 11 active divisions were able to make a cumulative donation of \$900, thus making the Northeastern Region's total donation \$1,650.

In alphabetical order, the Divisions that contributed to the total are the Central New York (Syracuse), the Green Mountain (Vermont), the Hub (Boston), the Hudson Berkshire (Albany), the Little Rhody (Rhode Island), the Metro North (north of New York City), the Seacoast (Maine), and the Sunrise Trail (New York City-Long Island).

Please accept this donation to the Diamond Club, and please earmark the donation for use in the scanning of items for the online archive.

Donation accepted, George. Please be sure to offer our thanks to the officers and members of the NER and its Divisions who made this donation possible.

Other region gifts

We've received some other Diamond Club donations from NMRA Regions and Divisions early in 2011. Here's a list of the ones we've received since we last published a list in my December 2010 column:

Southeastern Region, \$1,000.00

San Juan Division, Rocky Mountain Region, \$100.00

Division 3 (Dayton, Ohio), Mid-Central Region, \$1,000.00

Division 9 (Huntington, West Virginia), Mid-Central Region, \$250.00

I'm sure that by now you have seen the complete list of donors that was just published in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. It's wonderful that so many of our members have shared our enthusiasm about this great new resource. Please take a few minutes to go to the Archives address, <http://archive.nmra.org>, also available using the hot link button at <http://www.nmra.org>. Take a look around — I think you'll like what you see.

Craig Sutherland, who's been doing most of the actual scanning for us, tells us that he and the team are working as fast as they can to add the data and get everything posted to the site.

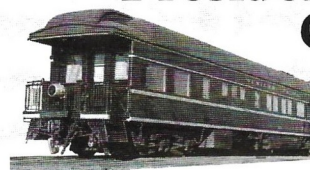
Archive improvements

Now that the Online Archives are up and running and we've posted our first scans, we're beginning to design a system whereby we'll be able to add further information to what was written on the slide mounts or the back of the prints in the collections when we received them. For example, there are a number of excellent prints on the site now that were taken 40 to 50 years ago at Cincinnati Union Terminal. Unfortunately, there was not much information recorded on these prints, and a person unfamiliar with CUT would not be too clear on what he or she was looking at. But as a life-long Cincinnati resident and a railfan and habitué of the CUT complex, I recognize much of what I see and can provide more information about the shots than we have now — information that will become more valuable and less accessible as the years pass and railfans of my generation pass away.

Similarly, you or I may look at some very interesting photos from other areas of the country, but have no idea of their origin or true significance. Much of their value may be lost on us, while someone from that area or with expertise in the railroad or subject concerned will know far more than we about what we're seeing.

So we're working with Brad, Stephen, Craig, and the rest of the HAS team to develop a secure online system so that Subject Matter Experts may add accurate data to photos that are already available on the site. This feature was

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NMRA President Mike Brestel

not in the original design specifications but we can see already that it is needed and will become even more important as time goes on.

We have other refinements envisioned for the NMRA Online Archives, but we'll get into that later. This month the real news is that the site's up and it's running. We will continue to develop this resource as long as our membership and users support our efforts. So let's keep those donations coming. And thanks once again to all who have made this major improvement to our member services possible!

Members-Only website open – ssh!

OK, stand really close for a minute because I'm going to whisper: In addition to getting the Archives online, we're also currently conducting a "soft" (unpublicized) opening on our new Members-Only site. Currently it's located at <http://www.nmra.org/member>, and when it's ready for prime time, we'll put a hot link "button" at www.nmra.org. The new site requires a member to establish an account using his or her membership number and zip code. Once that's done and a user name and password have been selected, it's very easy to get in whenever you want.

Inside you'll find the beginnings of our members-only content, including NMRA@Home, a number of interesting articles from regional publications; *NMRA MAGAZINE* classics; new and old Data Sheets; the Members' Store; the *NMRA BULLETIN*; online membership renewal; and much more. The "hard" opening will come later, but I thought maybe you'd like to sneak in and take a little look around before the official Grand Opening.

Chuck Diljak of our Communications Department began harvesting content for our Members-Only site a year or two ago, but time pressures have caused him to return to his regular duties. We have been fortunate to find two enthusiastic volunteers who have taken over as site Content Managers:

2011 April Pres. Column Continued

Tracy McKibben — Tracy was born and raised in southeastern Ohio. In 1999 he moved his wife and two children to Minnesota in search of winter and a strong technical job market. His fledgling HO empire was a casualty of the move, providing the opportunity to start fresh and to experiment with N scale for a few years. He's back in HO again, modeling a fictional subdivision of the Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railway from 1920. His modeling is interrupted daily by a professional certification and testing company, located in Bloomington, Minnesota, where he is the database administrator. Other distractions that have paid the bills have included work as a web developer, network administrator, and other assorted IT-related work.

Bob Robbins — Bob lives in Stony Point, New York. He and his wife have two sons and enjoy doing things with their two grandchildren. Bob is semi-retired from his commercial sign business and has enjoyed model railroading for more than 50 years. Over the years he has had seven layouts, five in HO and the last two in On30. The present On30 layout is 95 percent completed with DCC and sound in most locos. The setting is West Virginia, where logging and mining operations take place. Bob especially enjoys scratchbuilding and creating "critters" — small locos — for the layout. With more spare time available, he has decided to work toward an MMR. Presently he's being judged for three certificates and has two more nearly ready to submit. Bob has made many friends in model railroading over the years, and he's glad to give a little time to the NMRA to help make sure his great grandchildren have such an organization to enjoy.

We welcome both these gentlemen to the Members-Only site. We know they'll be working to increase the amount of quality "stuff" available as quickly as possible, and that what's there will change often. Guys, thanks so much for giving your time and effort for the enjoyment and edification of your fellow members!

Ballot problem

If you're an NMRA voting member and live in Canada or in the U.S. Central District, you should have received a 2011 director election packet by now. Along with the candidate

bios and the ballot itself is a pre-addressed return envelope.

That envelope has a mistake in the ballot address. There should have been a suite number included. Dave Liesse, the ballot committee chair, does not usually use the number, but with characteristic NMRA election luck, his regular postal carrier, who knows his suite number, went on vacation a couple of days after the ballots began showing up. The substitute carrier did not know where Dave's suite was and he marked all the ballot envelopes "return to sender, addressee unknown."

Dave's regular carrier is back, his local post office knows about the problem, and it should be smooth sailing from here on out. But in case you're just now getting around to mailing in your ballot, be sure to use the address below rather than the one on the supplied envelope:

**NMRA Ballot Committee
c/o Skingco Services, LLC
33530 1st Way S. Suite 102
Federal Way, WA 98003-7332**

If you've already sent your ballot and you're wondering if it was received, everything should be fine as long as you used a return address label. Then you'll know if your ballot was returned, because it will show up in your mailbox, as my ballot did last week. I just stuck it in a new envelope, added the correct address, and mailed it off again.

If you sent your ballot in without using a return address label, then you have a problem because the post office would not know where to return it. My suggestion would be to call or e-mail HQ and ask them to send you a replacement ballot. You can then send it in to the above address (with a return address label). The replacement ballot will be in another color so that the ballot committee knows to check to see if more than one ballot was received from you — only the first received will be counted.

We're sorry this new problem happened. We want every member to have a trouble-free voting process. We thought we had covered every angle this year, but this suite business is a new one for us all. You just can't make this stuff up!



All Aboard for the Magic...

article by Bob Brown, MMR

Imagine walking back through time to see where the hobby of scale model railroading began.

Then, imagine being able to walk the timeline from those early days all the way to today...seeing the kits, the models, the publications that inspired hobbyists for over 100 years.

Imagine being able to view actual portions of the layouts that have become the icons and the legends of today's modelers.

Then, imagine all this in the center of one of the grandest prototype railroading museums in the world.

This will be the "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" gallery located at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento...a venue that attracts over half-

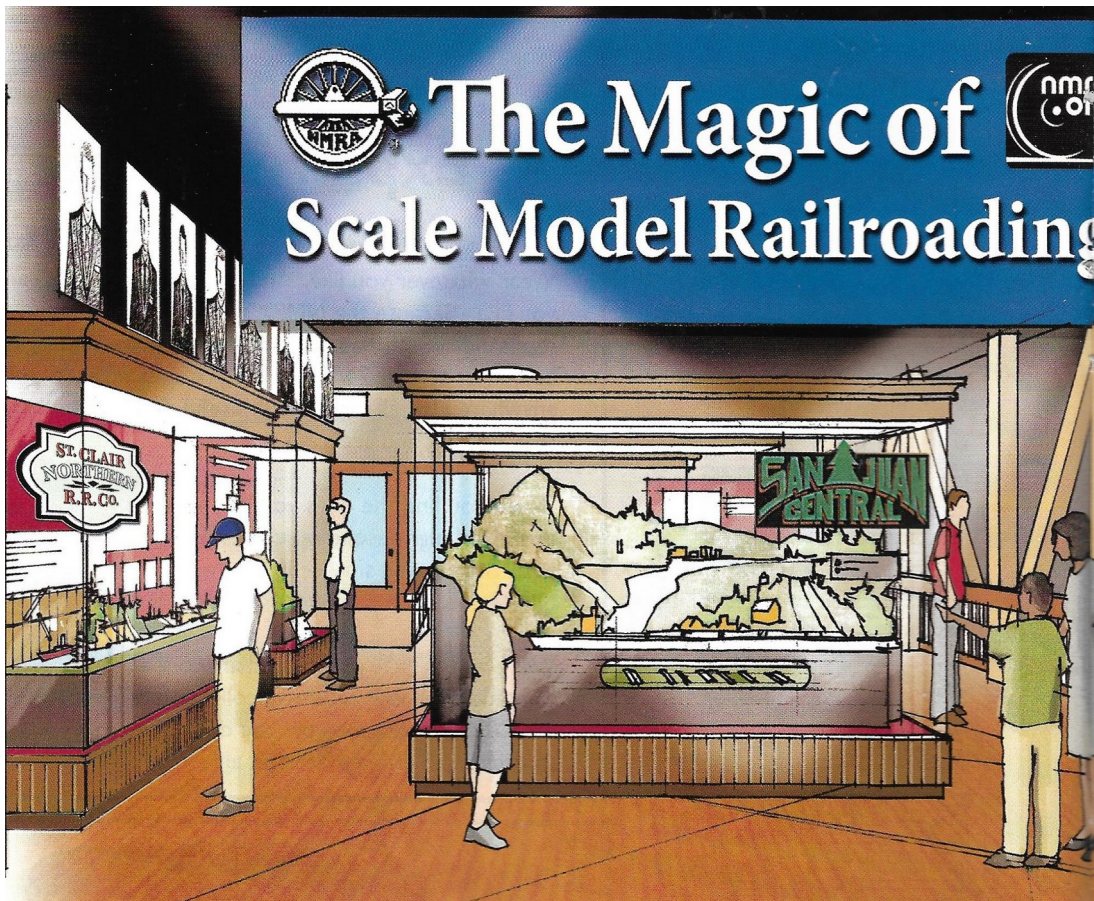
a-million visitors every year. The gallery will be managed by a non-profit corporation entirely separate from the NMRA, which means that no NMRA dues money or other operating funds will be allocated toward construction or maintenance of the displays. Instead private donations and separate fundraisers will be used to raise the money needed to build, maintain, and expand it in the future.

In its proposed 3,500 square feet, the gallery will occupy a prime location on the mezzanine, overlooking the Museum's main floor. Currently over 150,000 school children — many of whom could become tomorrow's model railroaders — thrill to the "Small Wonders: The Magic of Toy Trains" exhibit which lies directly next to

the "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" site. This prime space has been generously donated by the California State Railroad Museum for the gallery.

Here's an overview of the plan for this one-of-a-kind gallery:

As you enter the South Gallery of the "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" gallery, you're surrounded by priceless examples of scale model railroading craftsmanship at its finest. Here you see Malcolm Furlow's legendary HO_{n3} San Juan Central, built in the 1980s for *Model Railroader* magazine. A portion of Irv Schultz's HO St. Clair Northern, including his amazing ore dock, is also here. The gallery even contains the Clintwood section of Allen McClelland's original Virginian & Ohio railroad.



And arguably the most iconic of model railroaders, John Allen, hasn't been forgotten. Although few pieces of his famous Gorre and Daphetid railroad remain today, the "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" has secured the Wizard of Monterey's famous Time Saver switching layout...a legend in itself.

In addition, in the South Gallery you marvel at models of a Western town and a full-size CTC control panel, along with a garden railroad display and a display case filled with models built by the hobby's pioneers.

But your time travel truly begins as you enter the West Gallery and view "The Early Days" display. Here you can read the lines from a poem written in 1847 by Alfred Lord Tennyson describing a garden party with "...a dozen angry models jetting steam: a petty railway ran." This, more than likely, is the first mention of model railroads in English literature.

As you move on, you discover that by 1900 model railways were so popular in England that they had their own magazines, many of which are here on display. By 1912 many American model railroaders had subscribed to these publications, and in one edition you read the fateful lines by editor Henry Greenly, apologizing to American readers for the non-delivery of his preceding

issue... an issue which had been shipped on the Titanic.

Finally, you see actual copies of the first U.S. magazine to include model railroads, *The Modelmaker*.

As your time machine presses forward, you come to the years of the Great Depression and discover that it was a period in which model railroading flourished. Surprisingly, *Model Craftsman* and *Model Railroader* were founded in the dark days of 1933 and 1934, respectively, and the following year marked the inauguration of the National Model Railroad Association.

But what catches your eye is the display case brimming full of models, kits, and catalogs from such notable manufacturers as Walthers, Lobaugh, Scale Craft, the Structure Company, Mantua, Varney, and far too many more to list. Moving forward you see the model ads and paper kits from the leaner times of World War II, and examples of how the hobby bounced back after the war. You also see some of the first brass locomotive imports — a phenomenon that revolutionized the hobby itself.

And most impressive, you'll see cases filled with each of Howell Day's famous Red Ball kits.

Finally, your time machine brings you to model railroading today. Here you find examples of the various scales and gauges



North Gallery, Workshop

available, from Z to small-scale live steam. There are examples of today's myriad of locomotives, cars, structures, scenic materials, track, and control systems, along with a selection of HO-scale dioramas assembled from craftsman kits.

Your time machine lands you at the last exhibit of the West Gallery, The Literature of Model Railroading. Here you can page through how-to books (available for purchase in the CSRM's bookstore), and view a display of models and the articles that they were built from. Last, you discover hobby magazines from around the world, proving that model railroading truly is an international hobby.

The third and final gallery of "The Magic of Scale Model Railroading" is the North Gallery, which may appear to be under construction, but it's very much complete. What you find is a detailed example of a model railroad layout under construction, showing everything from benchwork to scenery to kit construction. In this gallery there's also space for live clinics, plus computer screens which continuously show videos demonstrating how to build models and model railroads.

The great "How-To" Masters haven't been forgotten, either, because the North Gallery also contains a long wall of NMRA display cases containing articles by pioneer model builders as Hugh Boutell, George

Stock, Eric LaNal, Bill Schoup, Frank Ellison, Mel Thornberg, Linn Westcott, George and John Allen, and John Armstrong... to name but a few. There are displays describing narrow gauge, traction, hi-rail, and even displaying model railroad passes.

Finally, for the model railroaders of tomorrow, there's an interactive area for children.

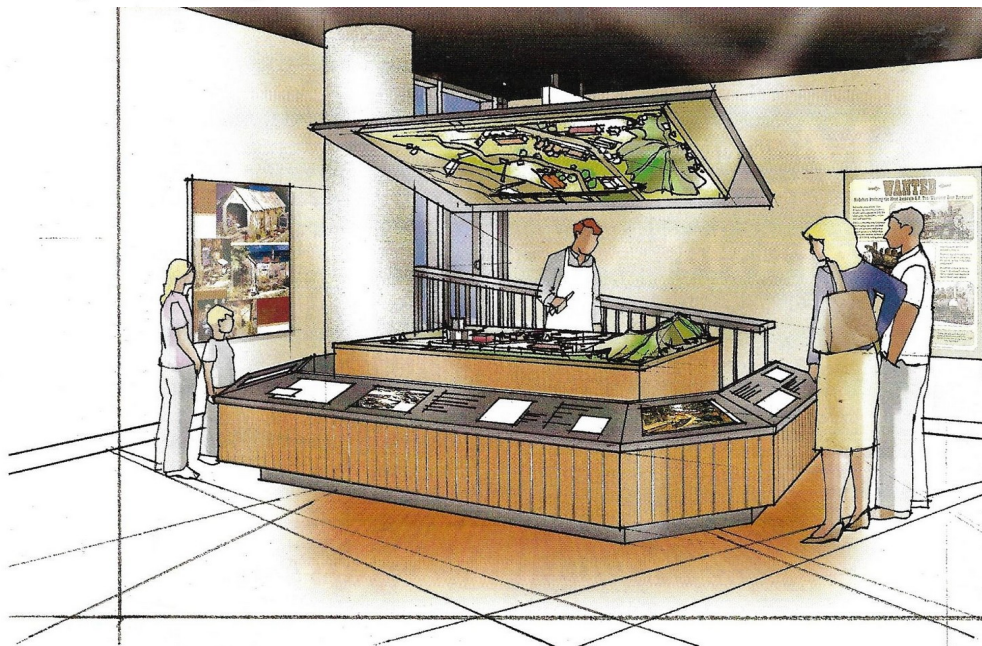
It's here your journey ends. You've witnessed well over 100 years of model railroad history, seen artifacts of the hobby... and learned quite a bit.

But the reality is, the journey is just beginning. We plan to have a "Carpet Cutting" (the indoor equivalent of a ground breaking) for this notable gallery at the Sacramento convention this summer. Watch *NMRA MAGAZINE*, www.nmra.org, and www.x2011west.org for more information about how you can be there from the moment this historic undertaking begins.

And watch your mailboxes later this year as the gallery begins its capital campaign to raise funds.



West Gallery, The Depression Years



North Gallery, Model Railroad Under Construction

2011 April

The Magic of Scale Model Railroading Cont.



Proposal for NMRA Scale Model Railroad Exhibit:
California State Railroad Museum , Sacramento, CA

2011 May

Jenny Hendricks promoted to “Chief Administrative Officer” from her former title of “Office Manager.” Jenny’s responsibilities still include “Office Manager” as well as a host of other duties.

At this point in time, Members began to have the option of not subscribing to the NMRA Magazine, which had the negative affect of cutting themselves off from the NMRA's main communication channel.

Outgoing Canadian Director Clark Kooning received a President's Award for 21 years of service as an NMRA Official.

A Report from the Vice President for Special Projects

President's Car

[This month I'm turning over my space to Bill Kaufman, our VP for Special Projects. He's been busy since his appointment last July, as I'm sure you'll agree after you read his report. —Mike]

The NMRA has never had a Vice President for Special Projects before. I should report to the membership now that I've been doing this job for a bit.

The last time I wrote to you, I asked "Why on Earth Would You Want to Be Vice President?" I'll try to answer that question as I go along. I said in that first piece that I wanted to be useful and that I was hoping to have fun. Other people would have to judge how useful my work has been, but this hobby is so interesting that I have enjoyed it.

When I took this job on, the Board of Directors asked me to do two things. One was to look into the relations between the Regions and Divisions and the National organization. The other was to develop what is sometimes called the "Social Media." I've also done some work with the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and a couple of other things that I will discuss once I have finished with these two BOD tasks.

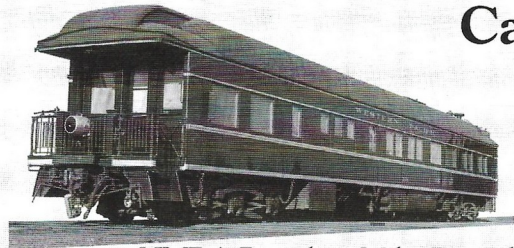
Beginning with the Regions and Divisions assignment, I surveyed the BOD and the Regional Presidents asking what they thought were the three most important things that the NMRA could do for its members. I had a sense when I started out that the BOD was concerned that the Regions didn't understand what they were trying to do and that the Regions were similarly concerned that the BOD wasn't getting their message. The survey pretty much confirmed that. It brought to the front the idea that their aims are different. The Regions

and Divisions are "retail," dealing directly with the customers, their members. Their focus and needs are very different from the more "wholesale" National organization whose concentration is on programs, policies, administrative matters, and the legal concerns of a non-profit corporation.

What is one supposed to do after finishing a survey? One should create a PowerPoint presentation. So, the BOD had to tolerate a talk from me with a bunch of slides. Though Gerry Leone's Communications Department had begun to address some of the highlighted needs long before I did the presentation, it began some worthwhile conversation about communications. The Board members talked about where to go from here. I sent the results of the survey to all the Regional Presidents, too. We have a new Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Director coming on board this summer and he seems interested in these results and thinking about what we can do.

I wouldn't claim that this one survey and PowerPoint is the final solution to anything, but it is a place to begin taking next steps.

The Social Media Projects have been fascinating. There was a group already in operation making and running a Facebook page for the x2011 West convention (www.facebook.com/x2011west). That group grew and added members and has taken over the National Facebook page (www.facebook.com/NMRA.org) and the Facebook page for the National Train Show (<http://www.Facebook.com/NationalTrainShow>). There are a number of Regions and Divisions with Facebook pages, and the British Region is experimenting with a Facebook page for next year's convention. I've been working with all these groups and gave the inevitable



NMRA President Mike Brestel

PowerPoint presentation to the BOD at the midyear board meeting.

I continue to work with the Social Media group and am developing a plan to present to the BOD in July on how to use all the technology to the NMRA's advantage, including Yahoo!Groups and whatever may be invented in the future. I have enjoyed creating a plan and imagining a future.

Beyond that, I have been disseminating the *Regions and Divisions Handbook* that I helped develop last year. There are four or so clinics for Sacramento based on its contents. A section on working with the Boy Scouts on their Railroading Merit Badge has been written and added to the files on the website.

I have been discussing a possible subdivision in Mexico with a couple of people from our Pacific Southwest and Lone Star Regions. So far that is still way up in the air, but our guys think that something could be developed based on the Achievement Program.

I began talking to the Standards and Conformance department about Standards, Recommended Practices, Conformance Warrants, and the like. The issue turns out to be how to move beyond just having them to making use of them in a way that enhances the NMRA. One of our Regional Presidents says he will make sure that at least once per quarter there is an article in the *NMRA MAGAZINE* either about a Standard or Recommended Practice and/or how to implement it. I'll let him introduce himself when the time comes, but he is starting work on the AP program and hopes to

2011 June Special Projects Continued

relate what he is doing in that process to the standards. It should give a face to the AP program, too. With any luck we could get an article or two per year for the commercial press, too.

Another part of this effort to publicize the Standards and make them more accessible to the general public was recruiting and encouraging Bob Sexton to make a YouTube video on the Coupler Standard. There is a link embedded next to the Coupler Standard on the Standards page. Bob is working on doing the same thing for most of the Standards and Recommended Practices. We get a double whammy out of this because the videos will also be on YouTube, which will encourage people visit our website for more information.

I'm involved in an effort to revitalize the SIG-NMRA connection. Mike announced the new Coordinator, Doug Harding, a couple of months ago, and Doug is working hard to make contact with all that we have on our list. Then we want to develop some activities that will help both us and them. We could gain from their specific expertise and they could gain from our wider membership. I have had a couple of interesting contacts with the NTRAK folks and the RailMarine group in this process. I hope something grows out of those.

It wasn't an official mandate from the Board, but Mike Brestel, Dave Thornton, and I decided that we would try to improve the contact with the Regions by each attending three Regional conventions per year. We should be able to get to everybody about every two years.

I had already been to the Pacific Coast Region's Convention about a month before I was given this job. I counted that in my total. I next attended the PSR convention in San Diego. The President of that region has, as part of the convention, held a training clinic

for officers and potential officers of the Divisions. I did a presentation for them about the *Handbook*. San Diego is also my high school hometown and the site of the five wonderful layouts in Balboa Park — good convention.

Later, I flew to England and went to the British Region's convention. It was a wonderful experience and much different from the conventions I have been to in the U.S. There must have been 250 people over the three days. They don't have the basements or access to American-style trains, so there are few tours and most everything happens at the hotel. There were 12 to 15 portable and modular setups placed around the hotel and quite a number of vendors.

The layouts ranged from about 2x6 feet to 10x30 feet. They were extremely well done. Some of them were generic and some were of specific locales, and one was a 30-year-old layout being rescued and brought back to life. There was a large N scale pike with a terrific container yard.

It was interesting and different to be able to visit a layout or a vendor for a while and then go up to the lounge where some of us had a pint and nattered a bit before proceeding to the next. It was a very social experience that I think many of our conventions could learn from. I did do a clinic on operations there and commandeered one of the layouts for a demonstration session.

I get to do this for another 15 months. I'm having a great time and doing things that seem worthwhile. Can't ask for much more.

Bill Kaufman

2011 June



The 2010 Scout National Jamboree's Railroading Merit Badge

article and photographs by Donald Jennings

Have you ever had to do a Railroading Merit Badge Class Session for 40,000 Boy Scouts? I recently had to do just that. Being a Railroading Merit Badge Staff Counselor assigned to "RR MB" for the 2010 Scout National Jamboree at Fort AP Hill in Virginia from July 23 to August 4, 2010, that is exactly what I had to do. It was a 4½-hour drive from Cary, North Carolina, with a sign in time after 1PM. Driving through the main gate on Route 301, everyone was greeted by military police. They had to visually and electronically scope the vehicle. I then drove to the registration building to pick up my housing assignment and meal tickets. The medical forms were checked over once again. All this being in order, I was able to drive to the Wilcox Area Camp where we received bed locations in the air-conditioned barracks. (Only Jamboree Staff personnel were in these barracks.) The Jamboree did not officially start until Monday July 26, but there was a lot of work that had to be accomplished prior to the Boy Scouts from all over the United States arriving.

The Railroading Merit Badge was one part of the Merit Badge Midway where up

to 120 merit badges where being instructed to the Scouts. The Scouts were able to fully earn the badges for which they attended class while at the Jamboree.

At the RR MB site, there were six "station" 20x20 tents. Each tent was a phase the Scouts had to pass through to fulfill the requirement of the badge. The National Jamboree recruited 64 BSA counselors/presenters just for the Railroading Merit Badge. This is not to say every merit badge had 60 counselors.

Station One: An Introduction to Railroading

Here Scouts learn how and when railroads started here in the USA. There was also a sample of train cars (a gondola car) from each scale, from the smallest to the largest size.

Station Two: Operation Lifesaver

This is probably the most important part of RR MB. This station deals with the education of students and adults in regard to train and road crossing safety. It makes the public aware of passive warning devices such as railroad crossing signs on the roadside and those painted on the streets and

highways. There are also the active warning devices such as flashing lights, clanging bells, and moving crossing gates used to alert drivers and pedestrians of approaching trains.

Station Three: Rail Industry

This station included identification and the uses of rolling stock and locomotives used on today's railroads.

Station Four: Amtrak And Passenger Rail

The purpose and formulation of Amtrak was covered in this station as well as the various types of rail traffic in use in the USA. Then Scouts learned how to read and use a timetable for a train trip of 500 miles or more with explanation of services and accommodations while traveling on the train and at destinations.

Station Five: Communication and Signals

This station included signal identification with the use of hand, light, and sound signals, as well as their meanings.

When the Scouts finished these first five stations, they had all the requirements for the RR Merit Badge. There was one more station, however.

Station Six: Time Saver Switching Contest

This station was the fun part of the badge and one that most Scouts enjoyed the most. There were 25 1x6-foot identical switching layout tables set up for the Scouts to try their luck and skill at a switching layout puzzle. The Scouts had to move two of the four cars from where they were set up to the finish location using a preset speed on the DC power supply and a double-pole, double-throw toggle to control track turnouts. The Scouts had five minutes to test their skills against other Scouts at navigating the switches and return to the start location. The best score I had for one Scout was three minutes and four seconds. Each day's winner received a donated train set. Those winners then competed on the switching layouts at the end of the Jamboree



2011 June

Boy Scouts Cont.



for a two-day Amtrak Rail pass in the USA for a family of four people.

As most people know when attending a National Jamboree, every Scout Troop/Council, Region, or State has an archway or gateway to erect and compete in a prize-

winning category. A lot of these gateways are very ornate and creative in design. The entranceway for Railroading Merit Badge was a black Norfolk Southern diesel locomotive. I have to confess about this as being true and not true. Actually it was a 40-foot

tractor-trailer painted black and decorated for Operation Lifesaver to look like the end part of the locomotive. The road tractor was pulled away and then a benchwork of plywood, sheet metal, and angle iron supports was put into place to erect NS cab No. 2010.

This took a couple of days of many people building this structure to have it ready before the Jamboree opened. This was used as the RR MB office and also for the Scouts to register for the badge before starting on the six station circuit that would complete their Railroading Merit Badge.

When asked where the Merit Badge Midway was, a lot of Scouts replied "Just look for the black 'diesel' locomotive and our group is ____."

We, as counselors, worked all ten days, with at least a couple of days off. These days off were used for patch trading (a *big* thing at National Jamborees) or visiting other regions and activities in and around the vast Fort AP Hill Jamboree area.

This was the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America and it was both an honor and privilege to be part of the celebration. The next National Jamboree will be in West Virginia in 2013. 🇺🇸



Bob Wundrok earnd Master Model Railroader 446.

Peter H. Jaynes earnd Master Model Railroader 436.

2011 July

Tornado!

A not so great start in July. Chattanooga Tornados! HQ sustained roof damage. Much worse, 28 miles away Chief Administrative Officer Jenny Hendricks' roof was taken off and her cars were damaged. Her property suffered extensive damage, but the great news is Jenny, and her family, are fine less shaken.

2011 August

Gary J. Burdette earnd Master Model Railroader 447.

David Howarth earnd Master Model Railroader 454.

Andrew R. Dodge earnd Master Model Railroader 454.



Sharing Member Information

Back in the old days, the NMRA printed a National Directory annually. I remember receiving 6x9-inch soft cover books containing the names and addresses of nearly every member in the organization, listed by place of residence. I remember poring over those books for hours on end as a teenager, marveling that with the information contained in those books I could send a letter to such luminaries as John Allen or Linn Westcott.

When I studied an older edition of a Directory that I borrowed from a friend, I was thrilled to discover that no less a personage than Mel Thornburgh, the celebrated scratchbuilder and B&O modeler whose work was featured regularly in *Model Railroader*, once lived about two blocks from the hobby shop where I was working. Boy, would I have been thrilled to meet him!

By the late 1970s the NMRA Directory was discontinued, falling victim to increased costs and tighter NMRA budgets. There was quite an outcry when the books went away, and I remember the NMRA leadership promising to continue to make area-based membership rosters available to persons who were planning a visit to a particular part of the country. This is a request that HQ had continued to honor through the years, until just recently.

As an organization that exists partly for fellowship, it is not surprising that our membership wanted to know how to get in touch with one another. From the complaints received when the Directory was discontinued, it was clear that most members were pleased that the National printed a membership roster for the entire NMRA that contained their names and addresses for all to see.

At the same time, many Regions and Divisions printed rosters that they then handed out to their members. Some are still doing it, and others are sending out the information electronically. In a more perfect world, this practice of sharing member information could have continued for many, many years. But once again, real life has intruded on our world.

I'm sure you're all aware of the increasing problems we all are having in trying to protect our personal information these days. Not

a week goes by without one large company or another reporting that its security has been breached and an undetermined amount of customers' personal information has been stolen.

In the old days, a crook would have to hit you over the head to steal whatever you had in your pockets. But now, thanks to electronic communications and an overdependence on computers, a criminal can take everything you have — even your name — while he sits on his couch eating a pizza.

Because of the growing problems we are all facing in protecting our identities, the U.S. Congress and most state legislatures have become increasingly strict about how well we guard our members' personal information. And because we share the growing international concern that member information must be protected to the best of our ability from theft and unauthorized use, the BOD has adopted a new policy concerning the use of NMRA members' personal information. That policy is printed below.

Briefly, what the policy says is that the National, the Regions, and the Divisions cannot share members' personal information with anyone who is not an NMRA official or volunteer authorized to have access to the information for official NMRA use. Some of the persons who can have access to the information are elected officials, membership volunteers, Achievement Program volunteers, and the like. Some of the persons who are *not* authorized to have access to the information are private members, 100% clubs, hobby dealers or manufacturers, and the like.

This means that we have to stop doing some things that we've always done. Regions and Divisions can no longer mail or email their complete membership rosters to the general membership. Divisions can no longer sign up new members to chat lists without first asking for permission. HQ can no longer send a list of members to a person who will be visiting an area on vacation and is hoping to see some nice layouts. When we send emails to multiple members, we have to be sure that their email addresses are not visible to the entire group of recipients. (You can do this by putting all recipients' addresses in the bcc address block.) We all have to become



NMRA President Mike Brestel

much more careful about sharing member information without checking first to make sure it's okay to do so.

There are times when it's still alright to share some information. For example, it is customary for Region and Division newsletters, as well as *NMRA MAGAZINE*, to print the names and contact information for officers and volunteers. That's still okay, because the member in question has consented to serve in that particular role and he could not do his job if his information were not known. Or if a member invites everyone to an open house, then it's permissible to list his address, etc., as long as the member agrees to it.

But it's wise to use caution in sharing this kind of information. For example, when I get calls from the public on my Division's hotline, I give out names and phone numbers only if I've been told it's okay. If a caller wants to reach the Division Super, for example, I can give out his name, phone number, and email address because he's already told me it's alright to do so. But if a caller wants to speak to an expert about, say, a DCC decoder problem, then I ask for the caller's contact information and pass that along to our DCC expert, and I leave the decision to him about whether to return the call.

The law in this whole area is moving rather quickly, and things that were legal a few months ago may not be legal a few months from now. If you're not sure whether a particular use of your members' information would be considered legitimate in today's climate, please ask.

We have an understanding of what U.S. law requires right now for the protection of member information, but I have already been asked what the privacy laws might be for our non-U.S. members. The answer is simple: We don't know.

Many countries have laws that are more strict than those in the U.S., and we don't

2011 August Sharing Member Information Continued

have experts in those areas. If you are in a Region or Division that includes Canadian members, we think that you will be protected if you follow the strictest interpretation of the new policy, but it still would be wise to consult an attorney in your jurisdiction. If you are Region or Division official in an all-non-U.S. Region or Division, we urge you to seek legal advice in your area.

One last caution for all NMRA members: There may be personal liability consequences for Region and Division officers, volunteers, members, and other personnel who ignore the new laws by giving out private member information for use that is not official NMRA business. I know that one Region officer has already been threatened with a lawsuit for sharing a member's personal information without asking first. Fortunately, it was a mistake and the member in question relented after some changes were made and he received an apology. But the next person may not be so understanding.

We do hope in the months ahead to begin asking new and renewing members for permission to share their information with the membership at large. This will take some time, and the effort will not reach our many Life Members. But eventually we hope to be able to share responsibly the information of members who have specifically given their permission to do so. This is called an "opt-in" system for information sharing, and we are still investigating just how this could work.

Again, this is new to all of us, so if you have questions about implementing this policy, please get in touch with either HQ, our Legal Counsel, or me. Contact information for all of us is available, as always, both in this magazine or at nmra.org.

National Model Railroad Association, Inc. Confidentiality Policy

In order to protect the privacy rights and concerns of our members, the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. is forwarding this statement to all Region and Division personnel. All such personnel are expected to understand and abide by this policy.

Due to changes in the law as well as increased concern over privacy issues and identity theft, it is now NMRA policy that anyone with access to membership information obtained from the national NMRA must agree not to disclose any such information to anyone who is not authorized to have access to the information for official use.

The NMRA is in the process of obtaining permission from each member to disclose his or her personal information to other members, as we have in the past for those wishing to visit or contact other members. Due to changes in the law and increased privacy concerns, we can no longer disclose such information without the consent of the members concerned. Moreover, no information should be disclosed by any NMRA official, elected or appointed, at any level of the NMRA, that would allow those without authorization to obtain the personal information of other members. This would include mass electronic mail distribution with private email addresses in the "to" or "cc" address lines where the information can be read by any recipient.

Currently member information such as name, address, phone number, and email address is made available to each Region membership officer, and is also available to each Region president. Those persons are expected to pass this information along to their Region's Division superintendents and membership officers so that they can use the information for official business. Welcome letters, re-rail letters, newsletters, meeting notifications and the like would be considered official business. Other official mailings to all Region or Division members are also permitted.

This policy strictly prohibits dissemination of member information to 100% NMRA clubs. Such clubs are not part of the NMRA corporate structure, and the NMRA has no way to control how such information would be used. 100% NMRA clubs are clubs whose members are all members of the NMRA, however, they have no other responsibilities to the NMRA. The NMRA HQ will continue to identify if a person is a member of the

Central Indiana Division Brings Kids to the Library

By Trevor Jones

The Central Indiana Division (CID) celebrates Model Railroad Month with a free show each year that reaches more than 700 youngsters and their parents. At the Carmel Clay Public Library on the north side of Indianapolis, we fill a hallway and a meeting room with layouts in all scales.

Before the show, the children's librarian works with us on promotion by setting up reading materials and story times that have a railroad theme. The hallway displays bring

in the curious crowds. Folks who find us get on their phones to spread the word.

Our CID table is set up to answer questions, show a continuous video, and hand out railroad magazines. Our "What scale is it?" display is very popular. Formerly, we had clinics in a second room, but found that the displays were the key attraction. When we were approached by the Circus Model Builders Association, we turned this second room over to them, adding their outstanding models as another attraction to the show.

We have plenty of great portable layouts in the Division, and our guys really enjoy this hectic show, getting great satisfaction from opening up our hobby to these lively youngsters. The library is thrilled with their train show, which has become a popular tradition and other libraries have approached us.

Your local library would probably welcome a train show. If they are doubtful, have them check with ours to find out how well it goes!

Summary

Those are some great ideas that hopefully will give you some of your own. Sure it takes a little effort, a little planning, and a little elbow grease, but the results can be well worth it. You'll be showing our hobby to potential members and you'll be getting your Division's name out in front of the public.

So start thinking right now about what your Division can be doing to promote model railroading during November. You'll be surprised at how much fun you'll have doing it, and how much fun your visitors will have seeing it.

Many NMRA members comment that we need to do things that attract more people to the hobby and to the NMRA. Well, here's your chance... and it's called National Model Railroad Month!



Above: Trevor Jones watches a young visitor having fun making discoveries for his "Layout Details Treasure Hunt." Trevor's Transylvania Railroad is a big hit with kids and adults, and is a regular attraction every November at the Carmel Clay Public Library in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Sacramento Report

You've probably already heard that the Sacramento National Convention was a success by just about any criterion. More than 2,000 members joined together in a great week of model railroading, followed by a successful and enjoyable National Train Show. One of my favorite activities at each year's convention is the Awards Banquet, where it is my privilege to oversee the presentation of the highest recognitions the NMRA can present.

This year there was no banquet, there was a "non-quet," which, I was assured, was just like a banquet — except we did everything on an empty stomach. The most envied people in the room were a group of local modelers who arranged to have a pizza delivered to their table part-way through the evening. I'll bet an auction would have raised upwards of \$20 per slice, but alas, no pizza was forthcoming to the ill-prepared.

It was a relief that no one was injured while foraging for sustenance during the three-hour affair, and based upon what I witnessed, I have a feeling that the "non-quet" is an idea whose time has come — and gone.

But there was an awards presentation nevertheless — a very nice one, actually — and here is the Awards Report:

Pioneer Awards

Presented to people who have led the way in the hobby. The Pioneers are selected by the Pioneer Committee, which was headed by Hal Carstens of Carstens Publications until his death. Currently the committee is chaired by Phyllis Carstens, and other members of the committee are Mike Brestel, Tony Koester, Allen Pollock, and John Roberts.

Max Gray: Back when there were very few painted and lettered, let alone assembled, freight and passenger cars and locomotives, modelers looked almost exclusively to decals. One of the most famous of the pioneering producers of decals was Champion Decals, which Max Gray founded in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1940. He later relocated the business to California. Most

of us are very familiar with Champ, but we may not associate its founding with Max Gray.

Max pioneered not only in decals but also printed car sides with an emphasis on the colorful private-owner refrigerator cars. But he is perhaps best known as one of the early importers of outstanding HO and O scale brass locomotives and cars, which he began in 1951, under the name Perfection Scale Models. Max became aware of the skills available in occupied Japan, and his wife played a key role by translating what was being said during negotiations with their Japanese hosts.

Max's models were built by KTM, with whom he had an exclusive production arrangement for many years. Among the more famous examples of Max Gray imports in O scale were the Erie K-5 Pacifics, Pennsylvania Railroad Decapods, Chesapeake & Ohio and Nickel Plate 2-8-4s, massive C&O 2-6-6-6 Alleghenies and Baltimore & Ohio EM-1 2-8-8-4s, Southern Pacific AC-9 Cab Forwards, New York Central Hudsons in several versions — the list goes on and on — all of which are still sought after by today's O scalers. He also imported diesels, including EMD Geeps and a Baldwin Sharknose, many electrics, quite a few freight cars, a variety of cabooses, and even a wreck crane with working lights.

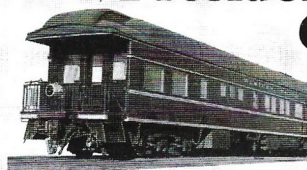
His HO loco and rolling stock imports are still well regarded today as well. Levon Kemalyan of Kemtron and U.S. Hobbies later acquired parts of this line, and much of KTM's production began to be imported by Balboa, then Westside.

Max is quoted as saying, "Any article made entirely by hand and of good quality retains its value long after a mass-produced article is forgotten." He ran his business according to that credo.

Max Gray, one of the real pioneers of the brass-importing business that has contributed so much to the hobby of scale model railroading, died in his mid-50s in 1966.

Lou and Sol Kramer: Today, when we think of Life-Like Products, we most

President's Car



NMRA President Mike Brestel

often associate the name with the high-quality Proto 2000 product line and its current owner, Walthers. Like Walthers, Life-Like is one of the names that are familiar to those of us who have been in the hobby for not just years but decades.

Life-Like Products was the creation of two brothers, Lou and Sol Kramer, who got their start in the late 1930s. As teenagers, they made model airplanes from lightweight wood they salvaged from discarded banana crates found at the old United Fruit pier along Pratt Street in Baltimore, Maryland, not far from today's Harborplace. According to biographer Jacques Kelly, who interviewed Lou's son Jay, they started the business with \$40 they borrowed from their mother and named their enterprise Burd Model Airplanes.

After the end of World War II, they set up Wholesale Hobby Distribution Co. and Kramer Brothers Hobbies. Sol and Lou sold model cars and fishing tackle, and they entered the Christmas garden supply business through their Life-Like line, which produced artificial grass, trees, and mountains for trains. The hobby business boomed in the 1950s, and the Kramer brothers made the best of it.

Jay recalls that Lou and Sol dyed sawdust for imitation grass on the roof of a building they owned on Barre Street in Baltimore. One of Life-Like's most famous products, lichen, was imported from Norway. Many of you may recall when we called Dayton, Ohio, the "Lichen Belt" because so many layouts, including Allen McClelland's famous Virginian & Ohio, had lichen-covered forests.

After a fire destroyed the Barre Street building, the Kramers rented one floor at 1600 Union Ave. and later bought the stone structure. They employed many local

people to make the little trees and grass mats. Numerous members of Baltimore's Lumbee Indian community also worked at the factory, which the Kramers ran until selling the business to Walthers in 2000. "It was a family business, and there was a great deal of loyalty," Jay Kramer said.

Lou Kramer passed away in 2003, but I'm happy to report that Sol Kramer is enjoying retirement at age 94. Present at the convention to accept the Pioneers of Model Railroading Award on behalf of the Kramer brothers was Phil Walthers of Wm. K. Walthers Inc.

Bruce Walthers: William K. Walthers was one of the hobby's best-known pioneers and, for model railroaders, along with A.C. Kalmbach, the peer who made Milwaukee famous! In Sacramento in 2011 we honored his son, Bruce. Bruce's 60-plus years of service to the hobby of scale model railroading began in the mid-1930s when he helped his dad during school holidays and over summer vacations for the princely sum of 20 cents an hour.

In 1937, Bruce began his studies of accounting and business at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. After graduation, he spent three years on active duty with the Navy in the Pacific. When he came back home in 1946, he went to work full time for Walthers.

The post-war years were among the most challenging the company faced. Walthers began selling their line directly to hobby shops, thus laying the groundwork for their wholesale operations. Even so, Bill was ready to fold the company when the Athearn line of undecorated plastic models was introduced. The ensuing demand for Walthers decals soared, along with sales of paint and detail parts. The influx of cash allowed Bill to retire gracefully as he turned over the reins to Bruce.

The advent of slot cars caused problems with model railroad product distribution. Under Bruce's leadership, the company became the first full-time wholesaler dedicated to model railroad products. This set the pace for the next 20 years. In the early 1980s, Bruce took advantage of an

import program to offer a wide selection of models from around the world.

Bruce followed his father's example by turning the company's day-to-day operations over to son Phil in 1984. But he remained as chairman of the board and played key roles in Walthers' transition to the electronic age, their continued growth as a manufacturer and distributor, and the acquisition of Life-Like Products in 2005.

Bruce lived to see Walthers attain the distinction of serving the hobby for 75 years. He died in January of their anniversary year, 2007. He is among the most deserving recipients in the long history of the prestigious Pioneers of Model Railroading Award. His Pioneer Award was accepted in Sacramento by his son, Phil Walthers.

Honors Committee Awards

The Honors Committee is chaired by Allen Pollock, HLM. The rest of the committee serves anonymously to avoid undue lobbying pressure. Award recipients are approved by the President and the Board of Directors.

DSA—Distinguished Service Award

(for service to the hobby)

Eric Cote of Accurail, a manufacturer of prototypically accurate, highly detailed injection-molded styrene HO models produced in the United States. During Eric's tenure, Accurail has been instrumental in the production of fundraising models for many organizations, including the NMRA.

Doug Gurin: Doug began contributing to the art and science of layout design in 1977, when he helped Allen McClelland prepare *Railroad Model Craftsman's* Virginian & Ohio Story. In 1982, Doug founded the Layout Design SIG, which publishes the *Layout Design Journal* and continues to sponsor highly popular and beneficial NMRA convention activities such as design exhibits, panel discussions, and layout tours.

Fellow of the NMRA

Nominated by NMRA region boards and approved by the NMRA Board of Directors

Paul Voelker: Paul started as an assistant to the National Photo Contest Chair more than 30 years ago, and has been the Photo Contest Chair for nearly 20 years. Paul has been responsible for the smooth running of the contest as well as for setting up the contest room and at times delivering the contest equipment. He has also been the Editor of the Southeastern Region's publication, *the SouthErner*, for almost 20 years.

Doug Auburg: Doug recently retired as the National Clinic Chair after six years in the position. He has also served as the chair of the 1994 National Convention in Portland, Oregon; as the Pacific Northwest Region National Trustee; and as National Treasurer. He will be chairing the 2015 Portland National Convention as well.

Department Awards

Meritorious Service Award

For service with distinction in NMRA administrative departments

Tracy McKibben: Tracy is responsible for Members Only website content and has

been performing other tasks for the IT and Communications Departments. He was put forward for this award by Gerry Leone, NMRA Communications Director.

President's Awards

Bob Beaty: After a distinguished NMRA volunteer career as SER President and in other offices, Bob served for the past year as the Central District Director. I am personally very grateful to him for giving us the benefit of his business and NMRA experience over the past 12 months.

Tim Klevar: Tim has served as the NMRA's Information Technology Department Manager for the past two years, and will be retiring from this position as soon as I can find a replacement.

Wilmer Seaver: Wil has done nearly every job in the NMRA over many years, including both PSR President/Trustee (four years) and PNR President (eight years), and is still heavily involved in a number of areas. This award is in recognition of his long service as the Head of the NMRA's Member Aid Program, from which he is retiring.

President's Awards announced in February 2011

Bob Ferguson: Bob has stepped down as NMRA Regional Advisory Committee

Director due to term limits after six years in the office.

Clark Kooning: Clark has stepped down as NMRA Canadian Director due to term limits. Counting his time as the Canadian Trustee, Clark served continuously on the BOT/BOD for 20 years.

2011 Gold Award for highest-scoring judged contest model

Presented to **Allen Gross** for an HO model of a McGifford's Tracklaying Machine.

As you can see, the Sacramento "non-quet" was a very busy affair. My congratulations go to all the honorees, and my thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the NMRA Sacramento 2011 Convention so rewarding!



NMRA Future National Conventions
(Note: Convention dates are from Sunday to Saturday. Last date of National Train Show is one day later)

Grand Rapids, Michigan July 29 – August 4, 2012
Atlanta, Georgia July 14 – July 20, 2013

2011 September

P.J. Mattson earned Master Model Railroader 467.

2011 October

Robert G. (Bob) earned Master Model Railroader 456.

Now For Something Completely Different: How About a Cruise in 2016?

Hold on to your hats. We've been looking at the idea of having a 2016 NMRA National Seminar on a cruise ship, instead of a typical national convention. This idea came about after the Board (and others) had been engaged in a process of examining everything we do at our National Convention and evaluating what works, what doesn't, and what options might be available to re-invent or rejuvenate a 76-year-old tradition.

Because this approach is so radical compared with what we've done in the past, we need your help in making this decision. Frankly, we don't know if enough of our members would sign up for this radically different kind of convention to make the concept feasible. In other words, we just don't know if this idea will float!

Please read the description below, **fill out the questionnaire on page 8**, and send it to us. **This is critical.**

The current plan is to contract for an entire cruise ship of approximately 884 rooms. The cruise would start in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on the last Saturday of September 2016, for one day of layout tours and sightseeing. The ship would sail to Seattle for a full day of layout tours on Sunday. The ship would then leave Seattle late in the evening and cruise for two days to San Francisco. We would have a full day of layout tours in San Francisco on Wednesday, and we would leave for San Diego late that evening.

We would arrive in San Diego on Thursday evening or early Friday morning. Layout tours in the San Diego area would be available on Friday and Saturday. In addition, the National Train Show would be held in San Diego beginning Friday at 10AM and continuing through Sunday. Cruise participants could stay aboard the

ship in port on Friday, but would need to disembark on Saturday, October 3, 2016.

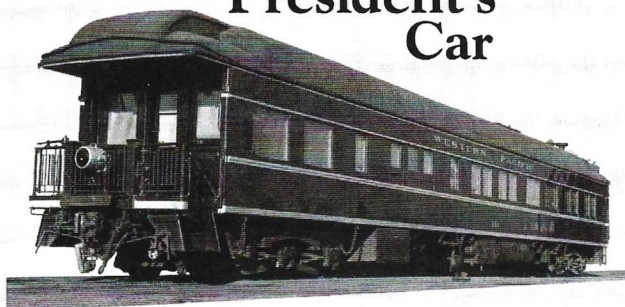
What would there be to do on the ship between ports? Well, pretty much everything one usually does on a cruise, including eat, work on your tan, exercise, play games, socialize, check out the scenery, eat — you know the drill. And clinics, of course. This would, after all, be an NMRA cruise. There would be sufficient rooms to allow three to five simultaneous clinics in between all the eating, cruising, etc.

Due to limited space, we would not have an auction. Plus, space for contest models is limited, although we should have room for 50 to 100-plus models, depending on the size of the models. Probably no diorama category at this contest!

Of course, we are looking for your spouse or non-modeling partner to accompany you on this cruise. Many spouses seem to find our conventions rather dull (can't imagine why), but there would be plenty of other activities on the ship to occupy his/her interest while you have your head buried in a train clinic. Besides shopping on board, there are two swimming pools (one inside, one outside), spas, different live shows in the theatre every night, a culinary art demonstration center where one can hone their skills, and several small venue spots of entertainment.

I know what you're thinking — how could you possibly fit this into a budget that will already be strained by the purchase of a couple Alleghenies that year? Well, it is true that the cost for this kind of convention would be a little higher than what you normally experience at an NMRA event. But it really won't be that bad!

President's Car



NMRA President Mike Brestel

Consider these factors: all meals are free, the banquet will be free; and there is a free show in the theater every night. For a cruise lasting eight days, rooms start at \$999 each person in a stateroom (inside) for two. For a Veranda stateroom, which has a sliding door to an open deck, the cost starts at \$1,699 a person. In a day when a motel room goes for \$140 per night and one day's food for two can easily consume a Ben Franklin (\$100), a room and all you can eat starting at \$125 each per night doesn't look so bad.

If you want more information about costs, activities, amenities, and policies, please sign on to Holland America at www.hollandamerica.com for a full review. For a deck plan of the ship, select the *Oosterdam*. This is one of four ships of the same class that we're looking at for the convention.

We know this is a new idea for the NMRA, although many other groups with a demographic similar to ours have been doing it successfully for years. We need for you to look at this idea with fresh eyes. We're not looking to replace the convention with a cruise every year, just this once. But we need your input. Is this an idea that appeals to you? Is this something your spouse would enjoy? Do you like free food and entertainment? Would you like to see the best layouts that Vancouver, Seattle, San Francisco, and San Diego have to offer — all in a little over a week?

Please take time to fill out the survey on **page 8** and return as soon as possible.

2011 October

NMRA-Howell Day Museum Project

California State Railroad Museum Gallery Exhibit Update

article by John Roberts Committee Chairman, photographs by Stephen M. Priest, MMR



On Thursday of convention week in Sacramento, we held a “milestone” event in the history of our Museum project. We “Cut the Carpet,” commemorating the kick-off of our major fundraising campaign for the “The Magic of Scale Model Railroading” exhibit that will be housed within the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. After ten long years of preparation and negotiations with CSRM, the project finally pushed the next big step toward reality. This is a world class museum and our presence here will do much to advance the educative effort necessary to reach the next generation of model railroaders.

Much has been said over the years regarding this project, and Bob Brown highlighted some of the gallery exhibits in a recent issue of the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. Our financial goal to build the gallery exhibit is \$750,000. Fundraising efforts planned include periodic mailings to members and outside supporters as well as to the model railroad manufacturing community, but this will not happen all at once. The mailings will be sent to various segments of the member-

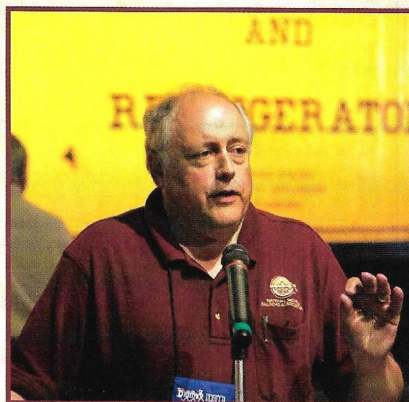
ship over the next five to six months with a goal of opening the gallery exhibit sometime in 2013. It's very rewarding to finally see “the light at the end of the tunnel.”

The event in Sacramento was well attended by donors, convention attendees, and a number of CSRM staff members. In all, about 200 attended the event. By the end of the event and reception, we raised \$75,000 from a number of very generous donors, and for that, we are very thankful. We've had much feedback following the event with indications that donations are to follow.

With the positive support from all of you and through the partnership and cooperation of the CSRM, our vision will reach completion before we know it. Thanks for your continued support and generosity to help make this happen in short order. 🚂

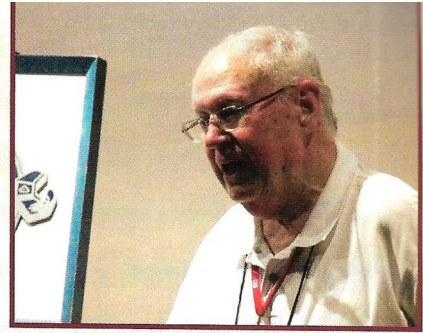
Middle right: Charlie Getz shared how the NMRA had been working on the Howell Day plan for the last decade and how he had pushed to unite the Howell Day Museum collection and the CSRM space and location.

Lower right: California State Railroad Museum, Director Paul Hammond addressed the crowd representing the state of California. Paul spoke with enthusiasm about the upcoming exhibit.



2011 October

Howell Day Museum Project Continued



Above: Collector, museum supporter, and life member Reid Dennis addressed attendees at the gathering. Reid made a significant donation to further the cause of the Howell Day Museum.

Left: Also in attendance were some of the industry's biggest names including: Walthers, Kalmbach, Carstens, Bachmann, ESU, and others. Here, Stacey Walthers-Neffah poses with NMRA President Mike Brestel (left) and Howell Day Committee chair John Roberts (right).



Above: Brad Joseph (right), personally and in memory of his father and long-time NMRA supporter Dee Joseph, made a significant donation to the museum.



Above: Paul Hammond posed with the members of the Howell Day Museum Committee. From left to right: Tom Draper HLM, Robert Amsler, Jim Lupfer, Bob Brown, HLM & MMR, Charlie Getz, HLM, Allen Pollock, HLM, Lee Riley, Mike Brestel, and John Roberts, HLM & MMR.

Left: Several cases of rare, one-of-a-kind, and distinctive models from the Howell Day Museum collection were set up to give patrons a glimpse of what to expect from the planned museum. Excitement was definitely in the air during and after this event.




CALIFORNIA STATE
**RAILROAD
MUSEUM**

Ted Wetterstroem remembered

Those of us in the Mid-Central Region were saddened to learn of the death of Ted Wetterstroem on September 21 of this year. Ted was a legend in the MCR, and worked as hard for the NMRA as has anyone I have ever met. Outgoing and helpful, Ted was one of the first members to introduce himself and welcome me when I was a young member attending my first regional convention in the late 1960s. We struck up a valued friendship that lasted until the end of Ted's life.

The day after Ted died (due primarily to complications from a broken neck after a fall last year), I received a phone call from Terry Bacus, Jr., whom most of you will remember as the past editor of this magazine (back when it was known as *SCALE RAILS*). Terry

is a longtime friend and has remained very close to Ted and to the Wetterstroem family, and his talents as a writer are well known. It is my pleasure to turn this space over to him:

A model railroad is never finished; it is a journey. It's a lot like life; there are times of fast-paced change, and times when there are hurdles. There are times of pride and accomplishment and times of sadness.

Ted Wetterstroem began his model railroad journey just after WWII, poring over the pages of *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* while serving in the Pacific. Ted died at age 84 on September 21, 2011, in Columbus, Ohio. His journey among us was complete, but the memory of his journey will live on.

It would have been hard not to meet Ted on his journey. A fixture in the Mid-Central Region, he could be found at nearly every division meet, region and national convention from the 1960s on. Ted brought his family along too, instilling a love of the hobby and a relentless pursuit of perfection in his son David, a well-known modeler in his own right.

A fan of the C&O, Ted sought to replicate it as closely as possible on his HO-scale Delaware Tar Hollow & Western, which was based on the C&O Alleghany

President's Car



NMRA President Mike Brestel

Division. His track plan was precise, and ever evolving. Those who had the pleasure to see it could easily appreciate the attention he paid to recreating specific scenes as closely as possible.

It is probably no surprise that Ted's attention to detail would lead to a life-long friendship with Dean Freytag, who was best known for his amazing recreations of steel mills in styrene. The two were fixtures at conventions and train meets, usually seen holding court and providing exacting information to those who sought it.

On a personal note, I cannot help but recall a time in the early 1990s when Ted and Dean attended the Chicago Model Hobby Show. Dean was holding forth in the Plastruct Styrene booth, while nearby Ted was providing details to a Walther about a prototype C&O model. Ted was always ready to help advance the hobby and donated his time freely, designing logos for the division and region and heading more than a dozen freight car fundraising projects.

Ted always looked for ways to stretch his modeling dollar and, being friends with Dean, was no stranger to styrene. He once went so far as to work with Darrell Logan to acquire the product in bulk quantities. The two acquired sheets of 4x8 feet in order to economize. Ted bought a lot of trains, so many in fact that he started his own model railroad retail business, D&T Enterprises. It was through D&T that many others came to know Ted as he worked train shows throughout the Midwest.



Photo courtesy the Wetterstroem family

A life member of the NMRA, Ted held both region and national office including that of National Statistician. Ted was the recipient of the NMRA's Meritorious Service Award, along with his wife, Doty. Ted was also a member of the C&O Historical Society, the Western Maryland Historical Society and an honorary life member of the Columbus Model Railroad Club.

Ted is survived by his wife, Dorothy Helen, daughters June Anne, Barbara Lee, Nancy Lynn Kane, Kay L. (Thomas) Gentry and son, David Howard (Nancy) and six grandchildren.

Ted's journey with us has ended but it is not finished, as all those he touched continue to enjoy the enrichment he brought to their lives. Farewell.

Thank you, Terry, for sharing with our fellow members some of what made Ted so special to all of us who knew him.

The Journey

As Christmas approaches, my mind invariably makes the journey back many years to the living room floor, my first model railroading experiences, and to my father. Those early trains were crude, simple, unrealistic, non-scale, and non-prototypical, and yet magical nevertheless. A deep bond was made between child and train and between child and father — bonds that still exist today.

I derive great pleasure from model railroading, and I probably would not have ever been exposed to the hobby had it not been for my parents and their willingness to purchase those Tyco trainsets, Athearn freight cars, miles of Atlas track, and then occasionally oblige me when I constantly begged for more.

Dad helped me build several railroads and repeatedly fixed broken items. After many years of modeling together, my hobby eventually became mine alone. Even then, I missed my father's presence and often wish that I could have convinced him to join the model railroad clubs with me, if even just for the companionship between father and son. As my own son approaches his teenage years, I have to say that we are bonded by the hobby. We railfan and photograph on Saturday mornings and model railroad at least two evenings a week. The hobby is a great way to teach your child how to solder, paint, measure, work wood and plastic, as well as a host of other skills far too broad to address in a short editorial. These skills will be used throughout

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR

his life and reach far beyond the hobby of model railroading. As a skilled model railroader I can fix just about anything, or tinker with it until it works. That is the true gift my father gave to me.

If you are not a parent or your children have grown and are no longer part of your immediate sphere of influence, take some time to look around and become a mentor to neighborhood kids or to a friend's kids (or grand kids). Most, if not all, of us have closets full of "spare" model railroad kits, rolling stock, or locomotives. Many of these will never be used and we simply keep them as part of our model hoarding. I encourage you as the holiday season approaches to gift these to those around you. You may be amazed at what becomes of them.

Model railroading is a hobby of mentoring, and as the mature modeler, one of our callings is to mentor the next generation. Help them and teach them all the tricks and trades of this great hobby. As an MMR, one of our obligations is to mentor other modelers, experienced and novice alike. You never know how you will influence another's life.



Stephen M. Priest

Cruisin', part II

Through October 29, 220 people have responded to our 2016 cruise survey, with 59 percent supporting the concept. Interestingly, the results mailed in from *NMRA MAGAZINE* readers are much more positive than the emailed results from the attendees of the Sacramento convention. I'm not sure what this means, but one possibility is that the customers for a cruise convention are not our usual convention attendees. We suspected that the cruise would reach a new market, and the results we've seen so far seem to bear that out.

But we can't make this decision based on such a small return. We need more of you to respond to the survey. Please take time to fill out the survey following this editorial and send in as soon as possible. If you filled out a green card in Sacramento, please also send the full questionnaire.

Here is a chart showing the percentage of available rooms requested so far:

Cabin Type	# Avail.	#Request	% req.
Inside	96	37	39
Ocean View	151	71	47
Veranda	477	86	18
Super Veranda	100	18	18
Deluxe Veranda	58	7.5	12
Penthouse	2	2	100

To date, we have requests for about 25 percent of the rooms.

Questions and comments

Several questions were asked and comments made on the returned surveys. I will quickly summarize these questions/comments and answer as best I can.

- How much railroading will be done while in port? We will be in port for at least 14 hours (8AM – 10PM). There should be plenty of time to visit many layouts, industries and OPSIG layouts. This is foremost an NMRA event, with modeling the focus.

- Is the timing wrong? You're holding two West Coast conventions back-to-back. You are correct, we would be visiting the West Coast two years in a row. However, we will have a chance to visit two cities

(Vancouver, British Columbia, and San Diego, California) that have not had a convention for many years, if at all, and we will not be stopping in Portland, Oregon, the 2015 convention city.

- The cost is prohibitive. The initial cost is higher, but please realize that *all* food on the ship is included. Entertainment is free — a different show each night in the theater. And we will certainly be negotiating with the cruise lines to get better rates, more in line with street prices found on CruisesAreUs, VacationstoGo, discountcruises, etc. Also, please note that that room rates are based on double occupancy. A single occupant of a room will see a 50 percent rise in his rate.

- Why is the NMRA stated cost of the cruise almost 25 percent higher than Holland America's stated/posted price for the same cruise? The normal transition cruise from Vancouver to San Diego is four days (three nights) with no stops. Our cruise is eight days and seven nights, with stops and convention events in Seattle and San Francisco. For only a 25 percent increase, we are on board twice as long and eating all their great food.

- How about transportation from the airport to the ship or vice-versa? The ship will have transportation available for an added cost. We will provide this information as we get closer to 2016.

- Will we be able to use our credits from past cruises on board? This normally means there are special events, such as "Meet the Captain and Crew" and "Special-Invitation Functions"). We will work on this. When you sign up, let us know your status.

- Won't there be rough weather along the NW coast in late September? Maybe, but not always. Besides, by Tuesday, we will be off the coast of California heading to San Francisco.

- Will you provide more than just train clinics and layout tours? The normal tours and lectures provided by the cruise line will be provided during this cruise. Train-related clinics and tours will be the added bonus. There are numerous clinic areas available on the ship for train-related clinics, but in ad-

President's Car



NMRA President Mike Brestel

dition Holland America is known for their cooking classes. In fact, they have a dedicated area for cooking classes. Hopefully, we can also use this space at times for train-related clinics.

- Does the cost of the cruise include convention registration? We will have some, but not all, of the standard convention-related costs that have to be covered. We will keep those costs as low as possible.

- Will the convention emphasis shift from normal train-related activities to normal ship-related activities, such as shows, gambling, painting auctions, and so forth? We hope you will enjoy many of our usual convention activities, as well as the activities one would ordinarily expect to find on a ship. One of the main reasons for suggesting this experience is to provide more incentive for spouses to attend. There should be plenty to keep just about anyone happily occupied for the duration of the trip.

- How will you accommodate local clinicians who are not on the cruise? We plan to have some clinics while in port for those folks who do not want to go on tours, and will work with the cruise line to let national-quality clinicians on board while in port.

- It is difficult enough to coordinate tours in one city. Won't it be much more difficult to do this in four cities? Thank you for your concern. We will be relying on the local Divisions/Regions and local layout owners to help in this coordination. Some experienced modelers in the areas in question have already volunteered to help schedule these tours. This local input and cooperation will guarantee only the best the area has to offer.

- Will there be local hobby shop tours? We hope so. We will be asking the local Division or Region to provide a full list

of recommended tours. This list should include visits to the local hobby shops. If enough people sign up for that tour, we will have it. If not, you can visit the shops on your own.

- How many people will the ship accommodate? Is it big enough? The ship will accommodate just under 2,000 people. We anticipate over 800 will be wives or spouses. This means about 1,200 modelers, which is pretty close to the recent average convention attendance.

- Will you have convention rates at a local hotel for those who arrive early in Vancouver and/or leave late from San Diego? Our goal is to do exactly that.

- Can't you do this convention earlier? I don't know if I'll be alive in 2016! Good question. The planning for the next four conventions is already too far along to be derailed. We talked about adding the cruise as an additional event in a couple of years or so, but our analysis indicated that we don't have a customer base large enough to support two major events in one year. We hope we're all alive and ready to go sailing in 2016 — too bad we didn't think of this idea a few years ago!

- What about the cost of airfare — especially since we will arrive at one city and depart from another? Below is a table comparing current airfares from several U.S. cities to convention sites. The last two columns are to Vancouver or Seattle and return from San Diego.

Origin	Round Trip Portland for 2015 (for comparison)	Round Trip Vancouver	Round Trip San Diego	To Vancouver / Return from San Diego	To Seattle / Return from San Diego
Philadelphia	\$373 - \$423	\$565 - \$989	\$350 - \$630	\$650 - \$1000	\$626 - \$815 w Amtrak +\$40
Kansas City, MO	\$262 - \$315	\$591 - \$688	\$250 - \$500	\$585 - \$700	\$357 - \$462 w Amtrak +\$40
Atlanta	\$377 - \$784	\$526 - \$671	\$268 - \$715	\$535 - \$1041	\$382 - \$434 w Amtrak +\$40
Houston	\$250 - \$453	\$534 - \$1037	\$238 - \$610	\$507 - \$1136	\$633 - \$645 w Amtrak +\$40
Denver	\$206 - \$471	\$478 - \$777	\$189 - \$606	\$407 - \$809	\$262 - \$486 w Amtrak +\$40

We hope this provides a little more information for your consideration. Please take the time to send those questionnaires back as soon as possible!

U.S. dues increase

Those of you who read the *NMRA BULLETIN* section of the magazine already know this, but for those who don't, I want to be sure you're aware that at its meeting in Sacramento, the Board of Directors found it necessary to institute a cost-of-living dues increase for U.S. members and others serviced out of the Chattanooga office, effective January 1, 2012.

The regulations stipulate that increases will be held to the increase in the Consumer Price Index since the time of the last dues increase, which was on January 1, 2009, three years ago. Everyone knows what has happened to costs since then (priced any flex track lately?). So effective January 1, Regular Memberships will increase by \$5 to \$44, and subscriptions to *NMRA MAGAZINE* will increase by \$3 to \$22. Sustaining Memberships (which include the magazine) will increase by \$13 to \$110, and Student Memberships (also including the magazine) will increase by \$4 to \$32.

The price increase will not affect our highly successful RailPass trial membership program, which will continue at \$9.95. The current RailPass conversion rate to Regular Memberships is something over 65 percent.

Memberships administered by the Australasian, British, and Canadian offices are not affected by this dues increase, since they are handled separately from

the Chattanooga office.

**Merry
Christmas!**

I'm out of room — Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season to everyone!

Mike

2012 January German – U.S. Railroad Convention

Article by Nobby Clarke, Atlantic District Director

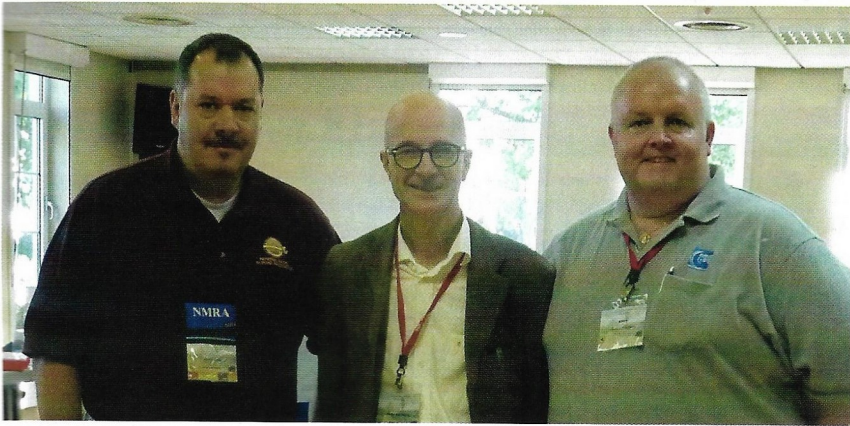
Over the weekend of October 14–16, 2011, I traveled to Germany to attend the Third Germany-U.S. railroad convention. This event is held every two years, and after going to the last one in 2009, I was invited back. But this time it was to be all business since the Atlantic District began on January 1, 2011, and I am the director. This convention would be a perfect venue to see just how much interest there is for the NMRA in mainland Europe. I need not have worried because it became very clear there is a huge amount of interest in the NMRA and the Atlantic District. People seemed very grateful that we had taken the time to travel to Germany to share with them all the benefits of NMRA membership.

Rodgau is a small village about 15 miles outside Frankfurt, and when you see the front of the village hall where the convention is held you think, “They will never get much in there.” However, you cannot always go by appearances. It was amazing just how many traders and layouts plus demos there were inside. Amazingly, it never felt over-crowded, even with more than 3,000 convention attendees coming through the doors.

Horst Meier and his team did a great job in organizing this event. I am grateful

to him for allowing us space and time to publicize the NMRA.

I was also very grateful to have Barry Bennett and Alain Kap help me man the stand — we certainly needed three of us at times. I was very proud to sign up Pelle Soeborg as a new NMRA member, who surprisingly has never joined before now. I know he will enjoy the many benefits of membership as I do. I also know that the membership at large will benefit from his skills and knowledge along with the other people we signed up.



Below: This is part of the excellent module built by the Golden Spike Modular Group from Denmark — one of many great examples of model railroading on display during this convention.

This year's convention was truly international with layouts from all over Europe, including a couple from Scotland and a great layout from the Chatham lads (a group from Chatham, UK). This was SPV's (Steam Powered Video) first visit to the convention, and judging by the big smile on Stewart's face, it won't be his last. His van certainly looked a lot lighter on the drive back to the UK.

One feature I liked about the convention is that they hold a meal for everyone who takes part on Saturday evening. It's a nice way to say, “Thank you.” During the

Above: From left to right is Alain Kap, Pelle Soeborg, and Nobby Clarke. This photo was taken when Pelle signed up to the NMRA.



meal, I awarded Alain Kap an AP Certificate for Association Volunteer, which I know brings him very close to becoming an MMR. I suspect there were a few relieved members, who were glad Alain never got to Bournemouth this year — he normally wins first place with his fantastic modeling.

I came away from Rodgau with a great feeling of togetherness. Everyone seemed genuinely pleased to be sharing this great hobby of ours. I believe this trip will be the catalyst that drives the NMRA's Atlantic District on to bigger and better things and something its members can be proud of. This is a huge untapped area, and the NMRA could benefit so many modelers here. The exchange of knowledge, ideas, techniques and so much more benefits us all. 🚂

NMRA Missions

The NMRA makes a diverse array of practical and technical information regarding prototype and model railroads available to both the public and its members.

One of the highly successful, visible, and vital missions of the NMRA is to establish, maintain, and promote a well-engineered set of Standards and Recommended Practices (S&RPs) that assure interoperability and interchangeability of similar products produced by different model railroad manufacturers. The success of this mission has been enormously important to the model railroading community at large.

In addition to the critically important S&RPs, another NMRA mission is to provide Data Sheets as an exclusive benefit available only to its membership. Data Sheets are both informational and instructional. They cover a broad spectrum of prototype railroad history, information, data, and practices important to model railroading in any era. Data Sheets describe how to adapt prototype information and apply NMRA S&RPs to every aspect of model railroading. They explain tools, materials, and equipment for building and operating model railroads and can help members prepare for almost every category in the NMRA Achievement Program.

The Past

The earliest Data Sheets date from the mid 1940s, just after the NMRA's founding in 1935. The NMRA provided more Data Sheets in the ensuing decades and ultimately issued them in loose-leaf form contained in a three-ring binder emblazoned with the NMRA logo. With the advent and explosive popularity of personal computers, the NMRA stopped producing loose-leaf Data Sheets. It then loaded the full set of Data Sheets, last updated in 1999, on a compact disk (CD) called the "NMRA InfoPak CDROM." You can still purchase it from the NMRA members-only online store. In addition to the Data Sheets, the InfoPak CD contains NMRA S&RPs and other important information. Unfortunately, when the NMRA revises any of the information it contains, the InfoPak becomes obsolete.

The Present

Recognizing that the NMRA had not updated the Data Sheets since 1999, the

NMRA leadership team recently embarked on a new effort to revitalize the Data Sheets. To substantially increase the benefit and value of NMRA membership, they envisioned Data Sheets with expanded and updated content to be posted on the members-only part of the NMRA website for instant access and download. To underscore the importance of this effort and maximize its success, NMRA president Mike Brestel appointed us (Dave Johnson and Van Fehr) to manage the revitalization effort (see the March 2011 *NMRA MAGAZINE* "President's Car" for the announcement).

Quoting the *NMRA BULLETIN* in the May 2010 *SCALE RAILS MAGAZINE*, Mike reported that "The reinvigorated Data Sheet program also provides an opportunity for delivering more value to all members via our website. The more technical or lengthy Data Sheets can be summarized in our magazine and then published in full in a members-only section of nmra.org. Photos that available page space does not allow to appear in print can be posted online, along with short video clips (or even virtual tours) of layouts and modeling projects."

In his April 2011 "President's Car" column, Mike deliberately "leaked" the members-only website. If you haven't seen it, you should look! There's a link to it on the opening page of the NMRA website (www.nmra.org). You'll first need to set up an account with your member number and other information, and then set a username and a password.

Once inside, you'll see "Data Sheets" and other important items listed at the left. Click "Data Sheets" to open the "NMRA Datasheets" webpage. It shows links to two "New/Updated datasheets" and another link to the "Original Datasheets." The two new Data Sheets are indicative of the enhanced content and quality that members can expect of the revitalization effort. Click on the "Original Datasheets" link and you'll have access to the full set of Data Sheets included on the NMRA InfoPak CD. As a benefit of your NMRA membership, you may now read and download these at will, and for free.

The Future

As the revitalization effort gathers momentum and we begin to see the completion of more new and updated Data Sheets, we'll present them on the webpage in a more organized way. You'll be able to use a "Google-

like" search for a topic of specific interest to you, and the search will return a listing of applicable Data Sheets. Once you find a Data Sheet you like, you can read it online or download it immediately for storage on your own computer or for printing and filing in your own loose-leaf binder. You'll be able to see a Data Sheet's revision date at a glance, and instantly know whether your downloaded copy is current.

To achieve the NMRA leadership team's vision for enhanced Data Sheet quality and expanded content, we are defining processes to recruit subject matter experts (SMEs) as potential Data Sheet authors and reviewers. We'll assign a couple of SMEs to peer-review each author's Data Sheet manuscript to ensure it has consistent, correct and valid content. We'll also assign an editor to help authors assure their Data Sheets are well-presented and a "good read." We've already recruited two expert authors and editors, NMRA director Tony Koester and *NMRA MAGAZINE* editor Stephen Priest, to help. We'll post all approved Data Sheets on the members-only website and announce their availability in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. Some Data Sheets will also appear in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, as either a full or condensed article. (See the February 2011 *NMRA MAGAZINE* for an excellent example of a full Data Sheet.)

This is an ambitious program that we expect will take several years to complete. We define "complete" as the point in time where Data Sheets only require minor maintenance, an occasional update or new Data Sheet, or archiving of older Data Sheets. As we proceed, you'll have an opportunity to give us feedback via the members-only website. We're off to a great start, so check the website often and watch the *NMRA MAGAZINE* for Data Sheet articles and announcements.

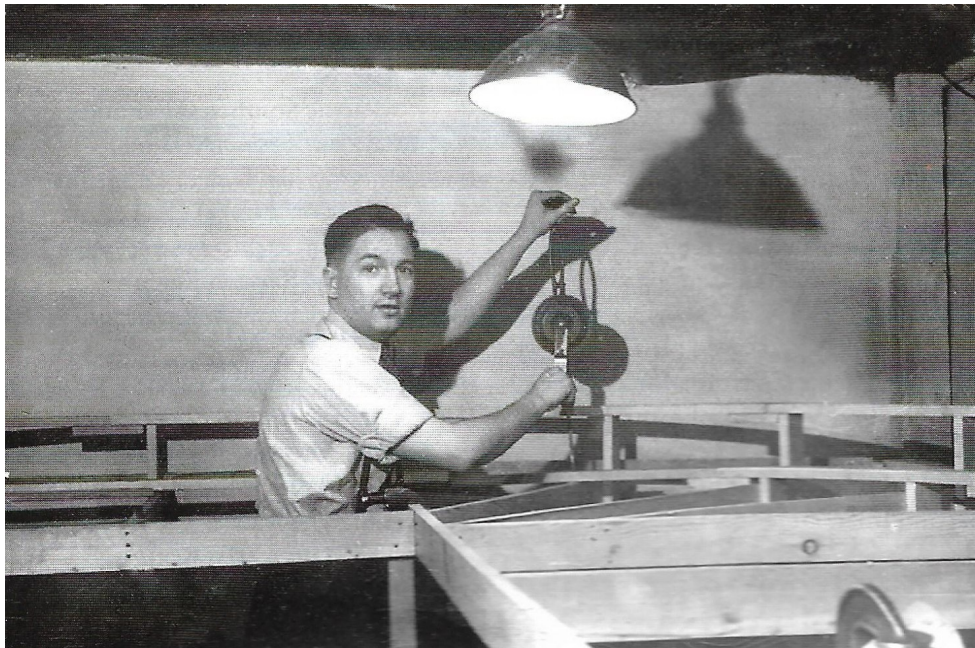
What You Can Do to Help

We're reaching the point where we need to begin assembling a list of potential authors and reviewers for new Data Sheets as well as for revisions and upgrades to the existing Data Sheets. If you think writing or reviewing Data Sheets is something you'd be qualified to do, please contact Dave Johnson at mdj@nmrads.mdjtest.com to request an application form. If you don't have e-mail, please send your request to M. David Johnson, P.O. Box 485, Glenview IL 60025-0485.

2012 January

Bob Parrish earns Master Model Railroader #448.

Here is an interesting photo of Bob in 1948. Bob is building a railroad with girder bench work long before Linn Westcott was given credit for the innovation.



2012 February

Charles W. Millar earns Master Model Railroader #471.

Chip Romig earns Master Model Railroader #423.

2012 March

Tom Brueggeman earns Master Model Railroader #460.

Nelson P. Moyer earns Master Model Railroader #461.

Bill Zawacki earns Master Model Railroader #468.

2012 March

Brian W. Sheron earns Master Model Railroader #469.

2012 April

Allen Merta earns Master Model Railroader #459.

Georgia Dahlberg earns Master Model Railroader #472 and becomes our 7th lady Master Model Railroader!



Grand Rails 2012 77th Annual NMRA National Convention

July 29 - Aug. 4

NMRA National, Grand Rapids, MI

Grand Rails 2012

www.gr2012.org

Do I drive, take a bus or ride in a Limo At Grand Rails 2012?

The 78th Anniversary of one of the oldest continuously operating model railroad clubs in the U.S.

A story about a very active 78-year-old

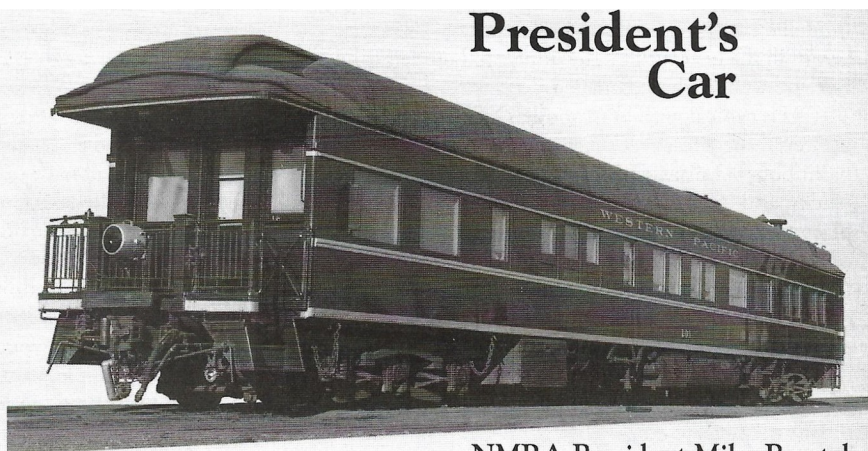
Two weeks ago, the Cincinnati Model Railway Club, the club to which I've belonged ever since they unwisely invited me to join in 1998, celebrated its 78th anniversary at a dinner at a local restaurant. A group of about 25 met for drinks, dinner, and conversation, and a great time was had by all.

The club was formed in 1934, and its first home was in a brand-new building, the Cincinnati Union Terminal, which was itself opened on March 31, 1933. The terminal remained the club's home until the railroads needed to commandeer the group's meeting room during World War II.

Erv Ohlmansiek is the only charter member still alive. Unfortunately, his health is not good, and he was not able to attend the dinner. In discussing the early days of the club, he told me that he was not exactly a charter member. He was 14 when the club was formed, and the group allowed him to hang around but he was not allowed to become an actual member until he turned 16. The 14-year-old boy is now the 92-year-old man, and he's still nuts for trains!

Probably the most recognized member of the club in its history was M.D. "Mel" Thornburgh, who was and is well-known for his series of scratchbuilding articles in O and HO that were featured in *Model Railroader* in the 1950s. Mel was the club president for a number of years, until he was transferred out of the area by his employer, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

The club was the sponsor for the NMRA 1966 National Convention, which was held in downtown Cincinnati. I was thrilled to be allowed to work on the convention committee as a 14-year-old, and I had a minor — very minor — role in the convention's success. My most enduring memories of that convention are meeting the legendary Ken Henry while help-



President's
Car

NMRA President Mike Brestel

ing to set up the B&O's famous portable layout that was featured for many years in the Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company's lobby, meeting Bill Walthers and Whit Towers, and meeting Allen McClelland on the convention's fan trip on the NYC line to Greensburg, Indiana, and return.

Some of the club members who did the heavy lifting at the convention were Charlie Schwarm, Gordon Fessler, Howard Gans, Lou Bandy, and Dick Klaus, and they were joined on the committee by fellow Division members Dick White, Jim Slaughter, and me. (They were in the locomotive; I was definitely in the caboose!) The 1966 convention provided the nest egg that allowed the club to enjoy many activities over the past 46 years and formed the basis for the investment account that still pays most of the rent on its current facilities.

At the time the club had a very nice layout in the Norwood (a Cincinnati suburb) City Hall. But soon after the conclusion of the convention, Norwood needed the space where the layout was located, and the club was once again cast out into the wilderness.

In the wilderness they remained for more than 30 years, as they met as a round-robin group in members' homes. Several members, notably Gordon Fessler and Charlie Schwarm, had large home layouts, and these layouts were the focal points of club activity until the late 1990s.

This was the time when I was invited to join the club by Tony Michel, himself

the builder and owner of a beautiful home layout. Soon after I joined, the club had the opportunity to move into permanent quarters once again, and we decided to occupy the basement of Harmony Lodge in Winton Place, another Cincinnati suburb. Around the same time, friends and fellow HO modelers Frank Koch and Dick White also joined the club, and we became O scalers together.

Harmony Lodge is a former Masonic Lodge and was once the Winton Place town hall. It is a great site for meetings and layout-building. Our local NMRA Division holds one or two monthly meetings per year in our quarters as well as an occasional Division Directors' meeting. The club has even hosted a meeting of the National NMRA's Budget Committee!

Since we moved into Harmony Lodge in mid-2001, we have been building a 32x64-foot double-deck O scale layout, and while the scenery is coming along slowly, virtually all the track is in.

We have a great group of ladies and gentlemen as the current club membership, and we are able to host monthly operating sessions, to which all NMRA members are invited. A number of HO and N scale modelers from the area have thus had the opportunity to experience operation in O scale. Some of the local railfans have joined us for sessions, as have three-railers, garden, and live-steam modelers, and modelers from as far away as New York, Virginia, and Texas.

The point

Why am I writing about all this? One reason, of course, is to recognize the 78th anniversary of one of the oldest continuously operating model railroad clubs in the U.S. But the main reason I'm bringing this to your attention is to relate to you a crucial decision that was made by the club just after we moved into our current quarters.

At our first business meeting in our new space, we had a discussion about how we were going to obtain the fire-legal liability insurance that was required by our landlord. As often happens in clubs, a committee was formed to investigate the most cost-effective way to obtain this insurance.

We found that a policy obtained through normal channels — even at what we were assured by insurance professionals was a friendly price — was going to run us around \$1,000.00 per year. But the same coverage was available to 100% NMRA Clubs for only \$50 per year.

From its early days the club had been closely aligned with the NMRA, but that relationship had deteriorated by the late 1990s. Still, a quick survey determined that of the 23 members in 2001, 17 were already NMRA members. The other six immediately volunteered to join so that we would be eligible for NMRA insurance. For the past ten years, we've been a 100% NMRA Club.

It's not just about insurance

But the NMRA-CMRyC story has been about far more than just insurance. We've developed a relationship with the Division that has been beneficial in ways we couldn't have predicted. The club has provided manpower for Division events and shows; has given use of its quarters regularly for Division events, includ-

ing Scout merit badge counseling sessions, committee meetings, operating sessions, hands-on clinics, monthly meetings, and AP classes and judging sessions; and has provided space for bi-weekly conferences between the NMRA president and treasurer. The Division has provided manpower for club events as well as layout-building and backdrop-painting expertise and DCC diagnostic help when needed.

At a time when many minority-interest model railroad groups have distanced themselves from the mainstream, the CMRyC has chosen to remain in the thick of things, to the advantage of the club, the local NMRA Division, and the other local railroad and model railroad groups. It was not always this way for the club, and the decision to integrate more fully with the larger hobby community can be traced to the decision to become 100% NMRA.

So here's the point: Yes, NMRA liability insurance for \$50 is a compelling financial benefit. But even more important than the huge monetary savings over the past decade is the opportunity that our NMRA membership and involvement has given us to participate in the larger modeling community, to the benefit, advancement, and growth of all concerned.

It looks like a great insurance deal, and it is. But as we've learned, it's much, much more. The NMRA 100% Club program can be a key to developing closer cooperation and involvement with other model railroad groups in your area. It's great for the clubs, and it's great for the NMRA. Be sure you encourage clubs in your area to take advantage of the program!



2012 June

Don Cook earns Master Model Railroader 479.

2012 July Stephen Priest Editor & National Board Member

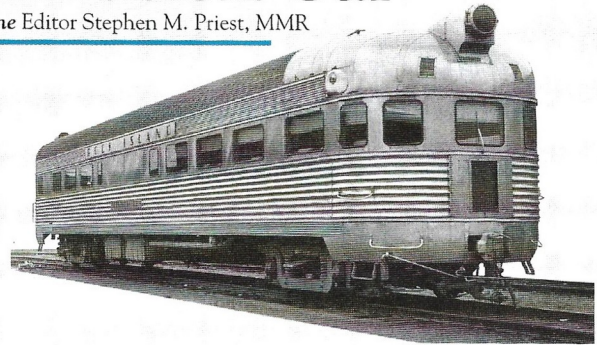
For the People

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR

Many of you may not realize that your editor is also on the NMRA's Board of Directors. I consider this position to be an honor and a great way to serve you, the member. My official title on the BOD is the Regional Adviser Council Director or RAC Director. Currently, I represent the 17 Regions with the goal of carrying their voice to the Board of Directors. That is not to say that all the regions have the same concerns or even the same challenges or issues. Quite the contrary. Different regions are concerned about different issues, although there is some common ground. My goal is to deliver to the Board concerns, communications, and interests provided to me by the Region Presidents or other concerned members of the RAC.

I vote on issues in a manner that I feel is consistent with the interests and directions of those RAC members. This, of course, does not always represent the preferences of every member because the possibility of coming to a 100 percent consensus on every issue is not possible. Being on the board also has another positive effect for the NMRA member — it allows me, your editor, to have a clearer look at what goes on inside the National Model Railroad Association and voice my opinion of issues that I feel readers deem important.



Being a rather visible member of the BOD, many NMRA members feel comfortable approaching me to express their concerns whenever I attend Regional conventions. This exposure further educates me on the heartbeat of you, the member. I value the NMRA and its mission. I value each of you as members of this great organization, and I feel the National Model Railroad Association is healthy and well managed.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Grand Rapids this July. Please do not hesitate to introduce yourself!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Stephen M. Priest".

2012 July

Ken Chick earns Master Model Railroader 476.

Charlie Crawford earns Master Model Railroader 466.

Will the hobby die with us?

Those of you who have managed to stay awake through my entire column each month know that I've recently been writing a lot about recruiting members, member retention, strategies for engaging new recruits, and similar topics. I believe there are new recruits out there, just waiting for us to extend them a warm hand. We need them and, although they may not know it yet, they need us.

But what if we're approaching recruiting the wrong way? What if we're wasting our time trying to win over age groups that just don't care?

This disturbing scenario was recently brought to my attention by Canada District Director Clark Kooning. He forwarded a thought-provoking editorial on the topic that appeared in the November-December, 2010 issue of the *Journal of the British Railway Modelers of North America*. It was written by *Journal* Editor Peter Cunningham, and it is with his kind permission that I reprint it here.

Peter asked me to let you know that the BRMNA is primarily an organization for British Railway modelers in the U.S. and Canada. Its membership numbers around 400. Peter's comments were aimed mainly at the BRMNA, but as he says, his thoughts could well be applied to the North American prototype modeling world as well.

Will the hobby die with us?

At the last Great British Train show in Brampton, Ontario, I gazed across the hall at the visitors and the exhibitors and beheld the all-too-familiar sea of grey-haired and balding old men (unfortunately fewer than there were at the last show two years ago), and the question came to mind again, where are the young modelers who will continue the hobby? There were, of course, some small children being dragged around



President's Car

NMRA President Mike Brestel

by granddads, and one or two teens, but nothing like what it ought to be.

My mind went back to the mid-1960s and the annual show of the Stafford Railway Circle, which was a small affair by today's U.K. standards. There were hordes of young kids and youths in attendance, the same ones who would pack into Bagnall's Hobby Shop on a Saturday morning, an Aladdin's cave of a shop with an emphasis on railway modelling. It is indicative I think that today, shops like that are getting harder to find, both here and in the U.K. I doubt that all those kids grew up to be railway modelers, but if the monthly magazines and model railway exhibition lists are an indication, then at least some did, or at least came back to the hobby later in life.

Of course we didn't have video games, computers, and Facebook to absorb our spare time; rather we were encouraged to build things and make things for ourselves. Airfix kits challenged us to "locate and cement," but gave hours of pleasure and a sense of accomplishment and, if it went wrong, taught us to deal with failure and to strive for better next time. To learn new skills, to use simple hand tools, and develop abilities that would open a door to a lifetime of creativity, in a hobby that gives back such enormous rewards; a hobby that requires many disciplines, many different skills, a knowledge and understanding of the prototype, as well as, commitment, vision, imagination, and artistry; a hobby that has multiple layers and allows the hobbyist to

enter it on any level and at whatever depth he feels most comfortable; and a hobby that is both relaxing, yet totally absorbing. It is perhaps the most personally rewarding, fulfilling and multi-faceted pastime that an intelligent person can pursue.

The railways of my youth, though I did not realize it at the time, were already in decline, yet still spread out across the U.K. and touched almost every part. They were integral to the industrial revolution and the tremendous societal changes that that produced. They were relevant and significant, had helped build empires, nations, and fortunes, and fundamentally changed the very way we lived. Trains took us on holidays, to the seaside, took us to visit with distant relatives, took us to unexplored adventures miles away and brought us back again. They took us to school and they took us to go shopping in the next big town. They carried our mail and our parcels, our coal and other essential goods. Taking the train was as easy as catching a bus.

In Canada today, it is rare to find a child who has actually travelled on a train, so how can we expect them to relate to railways at all, yet alone want to recreate one in miniature? Today, railways have all but vanished from the consciousness of our youth. The model railway hobby is so un-cool as to be laughable, and is so far removed from their sphere of interests as to be totally irrelevant and, I would venture to suggest, probably beyond their limited capabilities

ties. There may very well be some keen young modelers who are the exception of course, but in 26 years of modeling in Canada I have not met too many.

I do not subscribe to the widely held belief that Thomas the Tank engine is going to somehow secure the hobby's future, because of its popularity with the very young. In his revived, TV form, the little blue engine has now been around for many years, yet I see no sign of all the new recruits that he was expected to inspire. Indeed I would go further and say that Thomas the tank engine does us far more harm than good. It tends to reinforce, in the minds of the general public, the perception that we are nothing more than "little boys playing Choo-Choos." I am afraid Thomas rather condemns us to the nursery floor — an absurd if harmlessly eccentric and somewhat juvenile pastime that normal people would eschew. In my opinion we need to distance ourselves from Thomas and what that represents and project our hobby in a more positive and serious way. For if we don't take ourselves and our hobby seriously, how can we expect others to do so, and how can we begin to attract our successors?

Perhaps we ought to be looking to a more mature generation for new recruits? The thirty-to forty-somethings? People with a bit more ability and disposable income who are looking for a fascinating and rewarding hobby?

Railway modelling has grown up and matured into an adult's hobby. The scale models and fine-scale kits on the market today are not children's toys. The very quality and fidelity to prototype is way beyond anything those boys in Bagnall's could have dreamed of all those years ago, and the prices are beyond what my old paper round would have accommodated. So perhaps how we present ourselves, and our hobby, to the public and to those thirty-somethings, is an area we should be looking at.

On a recent late-night chat show, Rod Stewart, the pop singer, who is also a fine railway modeler (see the December 2010 issue of *Model Railroader*), was confronted by the show host with his hobby, as if it was a hidden, guilty secret. When the usual snicker came

from the audience, Rod turned to them and said "Don't laugh, what are you all laughing at?" When the audience saw he was not embarrassed by, or apologizing for, his hobby, they stopped, and when photos of his stunning HO empire were shown, they were suitably impressed and ended up applauding.

How we get our audience to stop snickering and to spark their interest and maybe one day start applauding our hobby, or better still joining in, remains to be seen. I would be interested to hear what you think.

Please send your thoughts on this subject, or any other matters arising from the Journal to the editor's e-mail address, studio20ca@yahoo.ca.

Peter has observed a phenomenon that is pervasive at NMRA shows and gatherings as well, and the demographic shift to the balding-and-graying set cannot be denied. That does not mean that things are over for us and we need to give up, but it does mean that we must be more intentional, imaginative, and effective in our recruiting and retention efforts. Thanks again to Peter Cunningham for sharing his very relevant thoughts with us. You can find more about the BRMNA at their website, <http://home.ca.inter.net/brmna/>.

As I ride into the sunset this August, I hope that even if I haven't accomplished anything else, I have been able to spotlight some of the ways that we can pass along our wonderful hobby and great organization to those who will come after us. And I hope that you have been inspired to spread the word about the greatest hobby in the world. As I said six years ago: if not us, who? And if not now, when?



Over & Out! President Mike Brestel

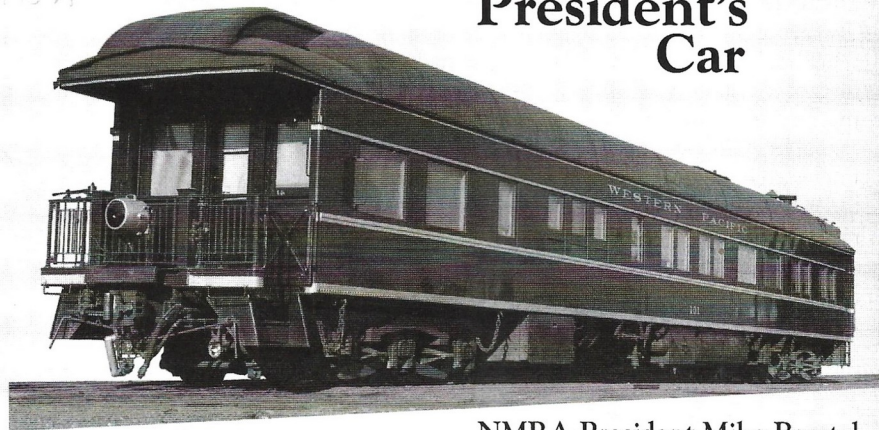
AUGUST 2012 publish
Over and out!

Six years ago when I became NMRA President, I knew I was responsible for 12 monthly columns per year for this space. That was a pretty scary assignment. But now after 72 months, we're down to the very last one. It's nearly over, and on July 29 I'm outta here! A new sucker, I mean volunteer, takes the reins of the organization that Sunday evening in Grand Rapids.

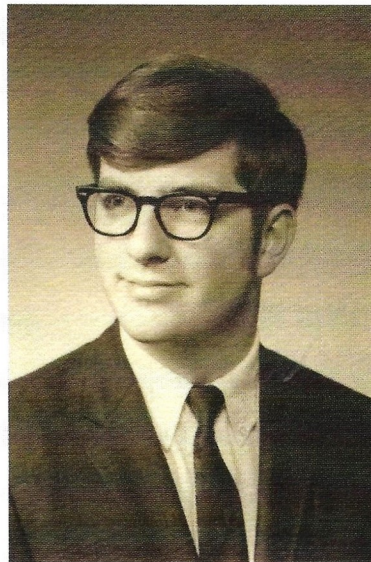
Over the past six years I've written about the joys, problems, and challenges of being a model railroader and a member of the NMRA. I've been inspired by the examples of leadership and volunteerism I've seen around the world, and I've been baffled by what some of our members see as problems affecting their enjoyment of the hobby. I've seen the heights of unselfishness and the giving spirit, and I've seen disturbing examples of the what's-in-it-for-me attitude. All in all, I've received quite an education in human nature over the last six years.

I didn't want to release this until Charlie was safely installed as our next leader, but he's committed as of July 29: one of the questions I've been asked repeatedly over the past few years is, why don't you run a photo of yourself on your column?

The truth is that I didn't want the presence of my photo to scare any members clean out of the NMRA! But since I've been sent to the barn and Charlie is safely in place and this is my last column, I figure it can't hurt anything to show you what I looked like before I took on this job. I look kind of like Jabba the Hut now, but back before the Presidency I looked like this:



President's Car



NMRA President Mike Brestel

do want to mention a very few people by name, however:

Allen Pollock came back from a well-earned NMRA retirement to serve as NMRA VP again. His steady hand and capable experience was a godsend.

Frank Koch stepped in during 2010 to become our Chief Financial Officer. After retiring from Procter & Gamble with large responsibilities in finance and human resources, he has made a remarkable difference in the way we conduct our business.

Gerry Leone, who volunteered to become our Communications Director, is both reliable and creative and has taken on project after project and delivered quality work whenever asked. I've leaned on him time and again, and he keeps coming through.

Jenny Hendricks and the rest of the HQ and Library staff — Brent Lambert, Diane Shaffner, Susan Straub, and Kristy Wilson — whose support, competence, and attention to detail have made my job easier every day. It has been a pleasure to supervise our staff since I began during my days as NMRA VP.

I'll spare you the after the Presidency photo since there may be children flipping through these pages.

Credit where it's due

I wish I had room here to recognize all the members with whom I've had the pleasure of working as we've attempted to steer this very big boat for the past six years, but there's not close to enough space here to do that. I

Allen Pollock and John Roberts, my predecessors, left me with a clear path, a great volunteer staff, and a record of good management and fiscal responsibility that has stood us in good stead.

Our Officers, Directors, Department Heads, and the many Department assistants give up their hobby time to do the work of the NMRA, month after month and year after year, with no remuneration and too little in the way of recognition. You know who you are, and I hope you know how much I appreciate all your efforts.

Many of the officers and members of the Regions and Divisions I've visited have made a difference in the way I've done my job. I've really enjoyed the give-and-take of the Region board meetings, member gatherings, and "Meet the President" events I've been able to attend during my term. I wish I could have visited every Region, but I just ran out of time!

My local Division, Cincinnati Division 7 of the MCR, has been a constant source of encouragement and support, but that's just the kind of people they are.

Stephen and Cinthia Priest and their colleagues at *NMRA MAGAZINE* have been supportive and understanding since I took office, and have never ever freaked out about my frequent dances with column deadlines. Thanks to their flexibility, I've never missed an issue!

Thanks also to all our members who have taken the time to write and call with ideas, expressions of support, suggestions for improvements, questions, and even complaints — I have read them all and have responded to as many as possible.

Special appreciation goes to my wife, Mary, and my daughter, Rebecca, whose support and encouragement have made all the difference over the course of our lives together.

Lastly, thanks to Charlie Getz for volunteering to serve in one of the most demanding, time-consuming, and rewarding posts the NMRA has to offer. His talents, creativity, enthusiasm, and skills will serve him and the Association well in his time as President and beyond. We're in good hands as we move into the future.

Into the future

For the dozens of members who are still reading this, I encourage you to stay positive about the future of the NMRA and the hobby. Model railroading is still the World's Greatest Hobby, and the NMRA is still the best way to experience the disparate facets of the hobby that make it so engrossing.

I've been writing a lot lately about how we can share our passion for trains with others, and I've been encouraged to read the many ways that our members have found to express themselves and promote the hobby. To quote A. C. Kalmbach, NMRA Honorary Life Member Number One, *Model Railroading is Fun!* As long as we keep this in mind and remember why we're here, we'll do all right.

See you around, and thanks for making the NMRA an organization I've been proud to serve and support for the past 46 years!



Attaining Your Goals

I have just come from an operating session. (I had a great time, Charlie!) Unlike the hundreds of sessions that I have partaken in, this one marks a special point in my life, actually, my son's life. The three-hour session allowed my son to finish his Dispatcher Certificate as he works toward achieving his MMR. The process of earning Dispatcher has taken more than four years operating on many railroads. Joel had to be yardmaster, dispatcher, and operate a variety of trains. The real beauty of this certificate is that it forced him to perform a variety of different model railroad jobs that he might not have otherwise been interested in exploring. It is difficult for layout owner/operators to let a pre-teen youngster take control of a yard or the entire railroad, as was the case when Joel dispatched. I wish to personally thank Rick McClellan, MMR; Charlie Stapleton, MMR; James V. McCroskie; Joe Kasper; Bret Overholtzer, MMR; Gary Hankens; Mike Tomei; and dozens of others for allowing Joel the opportunity to attain his goal. I also want to applaud my son for setting a goal and reaching it. He should be finishing his MMR in the next six months. It has been an eye-opening experience for both Joel and myself.

I have often heard that "the whole MMR thing is for snobs." I don't believe that is true. I liken it to a scavenger hunt. Certain attainable goals have been set up by the NMRA in a variety of

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR

categories, including electrical, scenery, engineering, rolling stock construction, motive power construction, operations, volunteering for the NMRA, and more.

Logic would dictate that the MMR scavenger hunt would be a blast to anyone that enjoys the hobby. I agree with that! I *loved* the process of getting my MMR. Receiving the award was okay too, but the process was a blast! This process cannot be achieved overnight. It will challenge you and make you do things that you never thought you would. Me hand-lay track? Never in my wildest dreams did I think I could do it, but I did. The Achievement Program is designed to expand your modeling skills by enticing you to do things you would otherwise never attempt. Model railroading is a goal-oriented hobby. Setting goals and working to achieve them is one of the crucial steps that will take you from armchair hobbyist to being an active modeler. Set that goal and then work the process of achieving it. As my grandfather Howard Bish used to say, "If you have time to kill, work it to death!"



Stephen Priest

Among Friends

As Cinthia and I put the September issue of the *NMRA MAGAZINE* to rest, the Grand Rails 2012 — The NMRA National Convention at Grand Rapids, Michigan, is just getting started. I have spent the better part of my Monday photographing the facility, people, models, and events. Cinthia is checking over my page layout and spelling in preparation to upload the magazine to the printer - deadlines wait for no one!

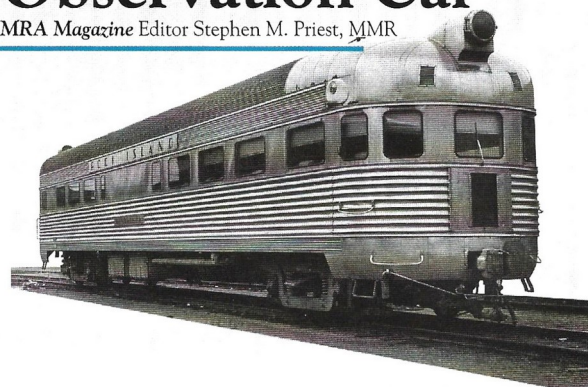
I always enjoy this annual event because I get to see people that frequent the conventions. That is, I get to see my once-a-year friends. That's right, I actually have a group of friends that are unique to the NMRA National Convention. My entire friendship came to be and is nurtured completely by the convention and our mutual love of trains. We go out to eat, on tour layouts, attend clinics, and simply talk. Sometimes we discuss the NMRA and its many facets; sometime we simply catch up on how our layouts are progressing.

I really enjoy that the venues constantly change. Last year, I spent time with Neal Schorr and his son in Sacramento, California. They are amazing people, and I enjoyed their company immensely. As I type this editorial (mid-convention), I eagerly await their arrival so we can catch up again.

A convention is more than a stay at a hotel. It is a way to make lifelong friends, who in turn make the convention even more

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



fun. I have to say that seeing my fellow modelers at the NMRA National Convention is one of the highlights to the event.

Stay tuned next month for full coverage of the 2012 Grand Rapids Convention. Jim Zinser is on hand and will recap his experiences in his Division Business Car. Bob Hamm, the National Contest Chair, will present the national contest winners (first place winners will have photographs). Finally, I will relay some of my experiences and, if I'm lucky, I can strong-arm a couple friends to provide their insight to the convention as well.

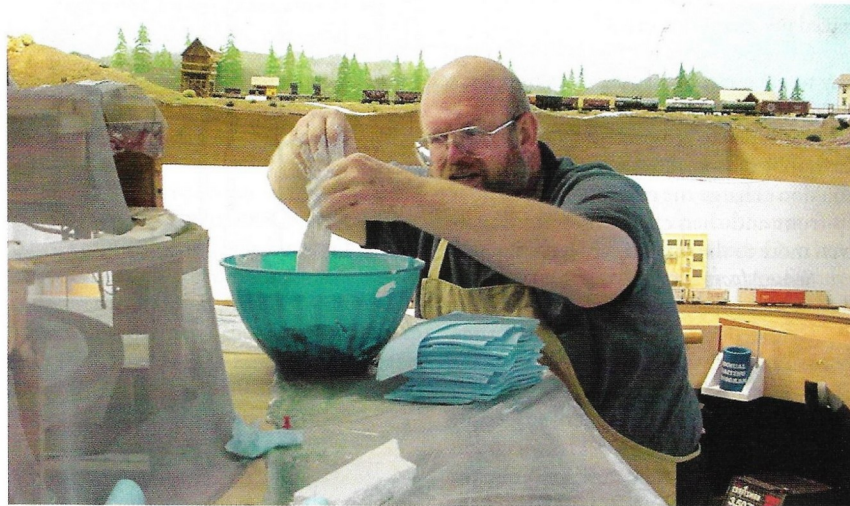
Stephen Priest

Fred Bock, MMR (1945–2012)

The NMRA's Assistant Education Department Manager and Master Model Railroader, Fredrick M. Bock, IV, passed away on May 29, 2012, at age 66, just two months after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Born October 10, 1945, in Bronxville, New York, Fred loved railroads from his earliest memory, living next to the New York Central tracks and playing with a Lionel train given to him by his grandparents. By age 14, Fred was reading Frank Ellison and becoming a "scale" modeler. At age 15, Fred's family moved to California, where he once begged his grandfather to stop at John Allen's home while traveling through Monterey. Fred recalled they were warmly invited inside for a tour of John's railroad. Fred earned his Eagle Scout, joined his first model railroad club (Eastbay Society of Model Railroaders) and, in 1971, graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a Bachelor's Degree and an ROTC commission as an Army Bio-Medical Officer.

Fred first joined the NMRA in 1972 while stationed at Natick, Massachusetts, where he also earned a Masters Degree from the University of New Hampshire and was a member of the University Model Railroad club. He also served at Walter Reed Hospital where he was in charge of Information Systems and at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where he earned a Ph.D. from the University of Texas and retired from the Army as a Lieutenant Colonel.



In San Antonio, Fred began a second career as a professor at the University of the Incarnate Word and was an active member of every rail history and model railroad group in the city including: The Alamo Model Railroad Association and Museum, the San Antonio N-track Association (SANTRAK), and the San Antonio Model Railroad Association (SAMRA), where he developed the club's first web presence and held a number of offices. He authored SAMRA's 501(c)3 status and helped oversee the construction of the Bob Clarke Rail Heritage Museum. He served as a director of the Lone Star Region NMRA Division 6 for many years, and earned NMRA Master Model Railroader No. 361.

Fred's Army experience, his Ph.D. and teaching experience, along with his scouting experience as an Eagle Scout and raising two sons in scouting, and of course his status as an MMR made Fred a perfect choice for his appointment in 2003 as the NMRA's Assistant Education Department Manager. In that capacity, he assisted with the NMRA's Boy Scout programs and monitored web chat/blogs to assist with the Scouts, the Achievement Program, Contests, Clinics, and other Education Department Activities. Fred was also instrumental in developing a relationship with the growing number of excellent model railroaders in Mexico, frequently visiting conventions and serving as the NMRA's liaison to that group. At the time of his death, Fred was gathering model railroading lesson plans from divisions and regions and planning to develop an NMRA Model Railroading 101 education program.

Fred's wife, Martha (Marty), requested that memorial contributions may be made to the "NMRA in Memory of Fred Bock," National Model Railroad Association, 4121 Cromwell Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421, or to the "Wounded Warriors Project," 12627 Silicon Drive, Suite 105, San Antonio, TX 78249. Fred's extensive background with education and model railroading will be missed. Fred is being awarded the NMRA meritorious service award and the President's award as a token of the NMRA's appreciation for his service. 🕯



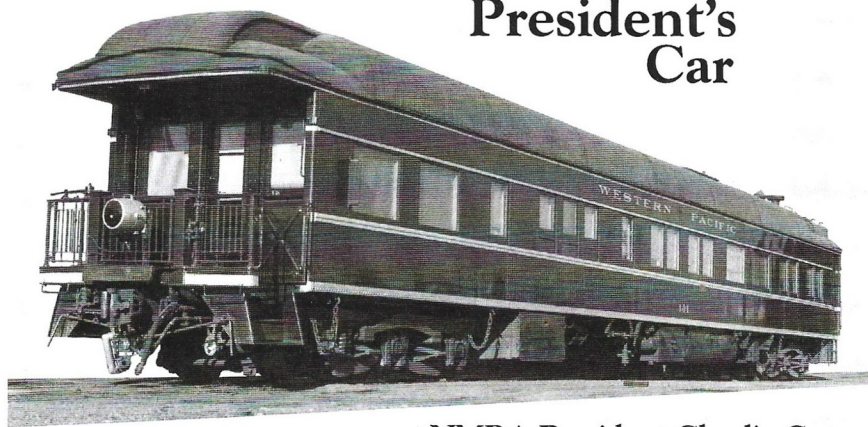
Who is this Guy?

First and foremost, my thanks to the number of you who participated in the election. Of course, I wish more of you had voted and that I had opposition, but that does not diminish the importance of your vote. I thank those of you who supported me and for those who did not support me; I hope to prove to you and everyone in the NMRA that I represent all of you.

In the movie *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, there is a scene in which Butch and his outlaw gang are being relentlessly pursued by a distant group of Pinkerton detectives. For days, the pursuit continues without end. Finally, exasperated, Butch looks down upon the advancing group and cries out to his men, "Who are those guys?" Well, you might be asking the same — who is this guy whom you have elected as NMRA President? Let me start by telling you a little about myself and then my hopes and goals for the next few years followed by some "ground rules."

I have been in this hobby for more than 50 years. It started, as perhaps with many of you, from a 1961 Christmas gift of a Tyco General set, some Life-Like grass paper, Blackman vac-u-form buildings, and a subscription to *Model Trains* magazine. The first years were most exciting as I discovered all the wonderful products and techniques needed to become a model railroader. I started a number of small layouts in those years, continuing into college and my first few years in my profession. Those layouts were in HO, N, and HO_n3. Over the years, I have built numerous models. Structures are my true love, having spent far too much time and effort building literally dozens, if not hundreds, of them over the years in HO and O scales. Now with retirement after 39 years as a deputy attorney general with the California Department of Justice, I look forward to the opportunity to finally build that master layout.

As some of you may know, I write a column in the *Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette*. I also am the owner of the San Juan



President's
Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

Central, a project model railroad built for *Model Railroader* magazine by Malcolm Furlow. Hopefully, this will be part of the Gallery Exhibit of the NMRA in the California Railroad Museum. I serve as Executive Director of the Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation. I also serve on the NMRA Howell Day Museum Committee.

In 1964, I recall buying a Kadee log car kit that featured a foil emblem on the box cover indicating that the product met conformance standards set by a group called the "NMRA." I had no idea what the NMRA was, but my hard-earned allowance money was spent with some assurance that there was a group out there interested in my welfare and telling me that the product I was buying met its standards. Some years later, while still in college, I joined the NMRA. I have been a member for more than 40 years. I became a life member decades ago. Also, I served as the last western vice president of the NMRA and the Pacific Coast Region (my home region), as president and later trustee on the Board of Trustees. As chair of the long-range planning committee, and with the help and input from many talented individuals, I drafted the regulations, by-laws, and the changes approved overwhelmingly by membership to modernize the NMRA and create, among other reforms, a unified dues structure. They said it couldn't be done — but we did it with all your help. That is important because as we

go forward, there are perhaps additional changes to keep our organization vibrant in a changing world and hobby. I have proudly served on the Board of Directors from that point until now.

My goals as President are simple: To promote scale model railroading and keep our organization vibrant and relevant to today's hobby. To do so, I think we must accomplish a number of things. We must first modernize the NMRA. We have made a good effort to do so. We need to critically examine how we do business and how our bylaws are structured. We secondly must improve our communications with our members and the outside world. Strong steps have been made by the BOD in this regard by attracting some excellent help to supplement our volunteer base in both marketing and internet communications. Third, we must better integrate our organization. Many of our regions and divisions are independent entities who are more affiliated with the NMRA than actually legally part of the NMRA. That makes no sense to me, and perhaps we need to re-examine the historic way in which our organization was formed to better integrate local branches of the NMRA. After all, there is only one NMRA, not multiples. We are all pulling in the same direction. Local divisions and regions are the lifeblood of our organization.

Fourth, we need to critically re-examine all our programs and functions to make sure

they continue to serve our hobby and our members, and make sense. Fifth, we need to increase our outreach to groups and organizations, especially those with whom we have had an uneven history or seem hostile. Finally, I believe that we need to aggressively market our “football” — that little seal that attracted me so many years ago — and help manufacturers understand the wonderful marketing opportunity the conformance warrant offers. It is more than just a marketing tool — it is a reminder of the importance of this organization both in setting standards but also in “enforcing” those standards through the marketplace.

I will be elaborating on these goals in future columns, and understand that the policies of this organization are not set by me but by the Board of Directors. These are things I want to work on in co-operation with the BOD.

Now for some ground rules. Our organization is famous for engendering controversy and in some cases, high degrees of emotion. Why this is true, I have no idea. I will pledge the following to you.

First, I believe in straight talk. I will try to be as honest and open as I can. Sometimes there are reasons why a full explanation is not possible, especially in areas that are under development or have not been adopted as policy by the BOD.

Second, I ask for and expect mutual respect in all things. There is no room in our hobby for name calling, personal attacks, or malicious rumors. I recognize a certain sub-set of individuals love to stir the pot. A little of that can be healthy, but not when it is destructive. After all, this is a hobby organization and the purpose of it is to advance a hobby we all love. Given that, there is no reason or need to be unduly harsh or negative. I don't expect you to agree with me all the time, but I do expect that my opinion will be as respected as I will respect your opinion. Civility is certainly not that difficult even when we may disagree.

Third, I will try to answer all the e-mails I receive, but please do not expect an answer. My predecessor tells me that e-mail occupies a great amount of time and this is a volunteer effort. If the e-mail warrants an answer, it will be answered. If it is more of a comment or even a criticism, understand it will be read and considered.

Fourth, I welcome your thoughts and your ideas. In evaluating those thoughts and ideas, I will ask a number of questions. Does the idea advance model railroading? Can we afford to implement it and is it practical? Does it do more good for the organization and the hobby than perhaps unforeseen adverse consequences?

Fifth, I welcome constructive criticism. This is a volunteer organization by and large. We are not perfect. Even our wonderful office staff occasionally can make a mistake. Because we are all human, including those who criticize us, some forbearance should be given and understanding that we are all trying to do our best. Any comments that are simply negative or dismissive will be treated in the same manner. As I said earlier, mutual respect is important to a functioning organization.

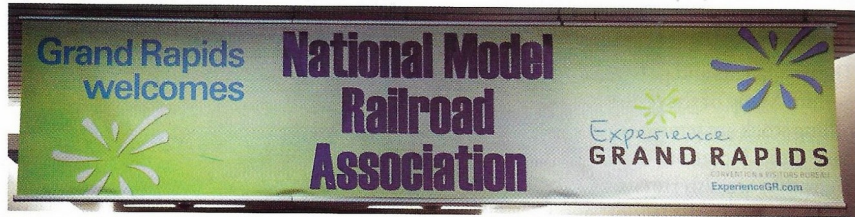
In the next few columns, I want to outline and expand on some of these ideas and perhaps respond to some of the comments you might send on this one.

I am very excited and confident about the future of our organization and our hobby. Let me close by saying that for many years now, I have heard from the naysayers that the NMRA is no longer relevant and that we are increasingly irrelevant. I reject those comments. I know that with your help and support and with firmness in doing the right thing for our hobby, our best years lay ahead. Those are my thoughts — what are yours?

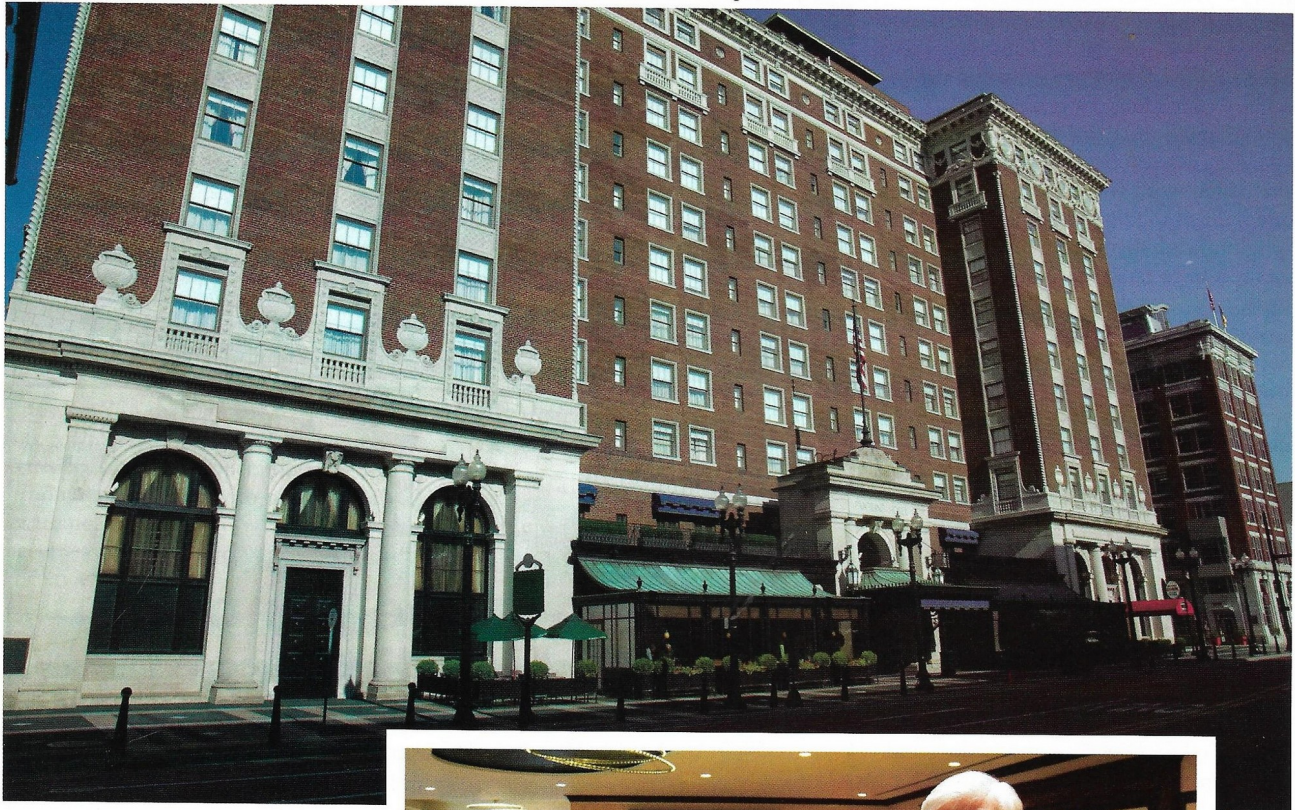
Charlie

A Grand Time in Grand Rapids

This summer, my wife, Cinthia, my son, Joel, and I attended the 2012 NMRA National Convention and Train Show: Grand Rails 2012 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was a spectacular convention in a beautiful city. In the pages that follow, various attendees and officials recap events, memories made, and National Contest results. Everyone's experience is different, but all agree that attending the National Convention is an invaluable experience. Make plans now to join the fun next year in Atlanta! (www.nmra2013.org).



Above: This welcoming sign greeted anyone flying in to the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. As the Priest family explored the city during their 10-day stay, we saw billboards, flags, and storefront ads all promoting the NMRA and its convention. Although considered a smaller venue, Grand Rapids was big on quality. The hotel, the convention center, the area restaurants, and the locals were all exceptional. The city is clean with beautiful architecture. The downtown is lively and active. We were treated to numerous free concerts across the street from the hotel. The convention planners couldn't have picked a better place to hold a convention. — *Cynthia Priest photo*



Above: The convention was held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan. This spectacular building featured amazing ballrooms, plush accommodations, and nicely appointed guest rooms. The convention center, where the National Train Show was held, was conveniently located within walking distance just to the north of the hotel.

Right: His duties nearly over, Convention chair Skip Luyk (left) appeared to be having a good time as he chatted with (left to right) NMRA Communications Director Gerry Leone, MMR; Division Business Car editor Jim Zinser, MMR; and At Large World Wide Director Tony Koester before the Saturday night banquet. Thank you, Skip and group, for a fantastic convention experience! — *both, Stephen M. Priest photos*



2012 October Convention Photos from Grand Rapids Cont.



Left: Outgoing president Mike Brestel (left) was rewarded for his service to the organization with an Honorary Life Membership. Incoming President Charlie Getz bestowed the honor to Mike at the convention banquet. Although his tenure as president has come ended, Mike — a lifelong and tireless NMRA supporter — quickly volunteered to take on many additional duties, including *NMRA MAGAZINE* Publisher. Thank you Mike for your years of continued service to the NMRA!

Below: Grand Rapids spotlighted many great model railroads during the layout tours. This amazing CTC panel is part of Bruce Chubb's Sunset Valley and is accurate both in appearance and in operation. As many of you know, Bruce is an electronics genius and is responsible for CMRI, the Computer Model Railroad Interface that many of us — the editor included — use to control our model railroads. — *both, Stephen M. Priest photos*



Left: Karen and Dick Bronson spent part of their afternoon wandering around the immense Sunset Valley. The two appeared to be enjoying the beautiful railroad.

Below: Outgoing president Mike Brestel presented Dr. Robert "Doc" Chait with the President's award and the "Fellow of the NMRA" award for his years of outstanding volunteer work in support of the NMRA and its goals and values. Doc has been responsible for the personal recruitment of dozens of NMRA members. He regularly volunteers and works at the NMRA booth during the National Train Show. His welcoming demeanor and enthusiasm for model trains and the NMRA enables him to attract many new members. — *both, Stephen M. Priest photos*



2012 October Convention Photos from Grand Rapids Cont.

“Modeling with the Masters” at Convention



Here are MMRs, Clark Kooning and W. Miles Hale

Below: Miles Hale, MMR; John Lowrance, MMR; and Fran Hale, MMR, showed a variety of rock molds to the class and then demonstrated how to use each of them. The technique used for the large rock mold was very interesting and featured a pillow-push method to keep the plaster from cracking up while setting.



W. Miles Hale, John Lowrance and Fran Hale, all MMRs

Where Do the Tracks Lead? Planning...

Yogi Berra once observed “You got to be very careful if you don’t know where you’re going, because you might not get there.” That little bit of folksy humor really is applicable to life and to the way organizations like our NMRA operate. We can spend much time and energy spinning our wheels if we do not have a clearly defined goal or objective toward which we intentionally proceed.

The initial NMRA Long Range Plan (LRP), enacted in 2006, helped begin our planned journey by making the NMRA more efficient in management, more effective in providing services to members, and more enjoyable by concentrating Association efforts on education and fellowship. Now it is time to extend our planning horizon and establish both the path we will follow and the priorities we will observe for the next five or six years.

My name is Jack Hamilton. I am your Western District Director, and I have the pleasure of chairing the committee, which was established by President Charlie Getz, to review the existing LRP and to prepare the following strategic plan. The LRP review will look at what objectives we have achieved, items still in progress, and good ideas overtaken by events. The committee is also charged to establish the NMRA’s long-term goals and objectives and to prepare the draft plan that will help us achieve those objectives.

We need your help. This committee cares very much about what members think and about your dreams and ideas. We cannot draft a proper plan if we do not understand what is important to you and what you desire from our association. Without your input, we could very easily arrive at our destination only to find that you got off before the train left the station. I am asking for your help, and I am challenging you to shift into “constructive offering” mode to provide us with your ideas.

For the average member, the NMRA provides real value through the programs offered and opportunities presented. The plan we draft will reflect predictable outcomes related to specific programs. Our plan will include incremental, measurable steps or achievement points, coupled with a time

line for accomplishment. Those qualities will enable us to accurately determine progress toward the objectives, identify emergent problems and needs, be responsive to unanticipated events and occurrences, and to take positive corrective steps when necessary. The plan we draft will ensure that we effectively apply our limited resources, especially the services provided by our member volunteers. The greater the positive participation by members, the better the plan we will draft, and the more likely that we will be successful — you will derive greater benefit as a member.

Enough philosophy, let’s get down to how you get involved.

We need your ideas and your dreams. You need to put yourself in the year 2018. What does our NMRA look like? How does it function and deliver value to the members? How are we perceived by the public as a model railroad association? How are we positioned to continue successful operations into the year 2025?

I ask that you consider end objectives of our plan without addressing the intricate details of how we will get there. This approach allows each of us to express our most basic desires for performance without having to answer “who?” or “how much?” Those questions will certainly come later and will have to be answered, but they are not central to the conceptual picture that we draft for NMRA 2018.

To channel our thought process into general areas or categories that are associated with existing program areas, it would be best to express expectations or desires in terms related to those programs. While some degree of accuracy in association is always appreciated, getting ideas captured on paper is more important. A short, concise statement (bullet point) of an objective is preferable to lengthy, detailed explanations. The important thing is to make sure that the statement of an idea is sufficient for the drafter to understand what you intend. You need not contribute in every area but are welcome to do so. The following are the general program areas we ask that you address with your ideas and objectives (Remember, we are talking about what the NMRA is in 2018):

- a. Membership (size/numbers and demographics)
- b. Education (internal and external)
- c. Communications (up, down, and sideways)
- d. Organization Structure (internal relationships and functions)
- e. General Administration
- f. Convention (National, Regional, Other)
- g. Financial (dues, assets, investments, etc.)
- h. Public involvement (how we interface with the public)
- i. Standards, Recommended Practices, and Data Sheets
- j. Association Publications (what, why, how, etc.)

I realize that the areas are broad and may overlap in some cases. Even if you can’t figure out which category your idea fits into, give it to us anyway. Let us find the right home. You might think, “we can’t do that” or “they will never use this,” and you will be absolutely correct if you don’t send us the idea. If we did not want or intend to use your input, we would not have asked. Please don’t let us down — be a player in this game.

Our initial task will be to read, record, and collate all the ideas and recommendations. We will then canvas the inputs for the apparent priorities. (When 1,000 members all agree on something, I am certain the message will be clear.) We will also be looking for associated ideas or recommendations that create a synergy when coupled.

After the initial phase will come the hard work of figuring out how to accomplish the objectives.

But let’s not get ahead of ourselves. Let us first address the ideas that you have about the NMRA’s future. Let’s join together and move our NMRA into the 21st Century and beyond (thank you, Buzz Lightyear)!

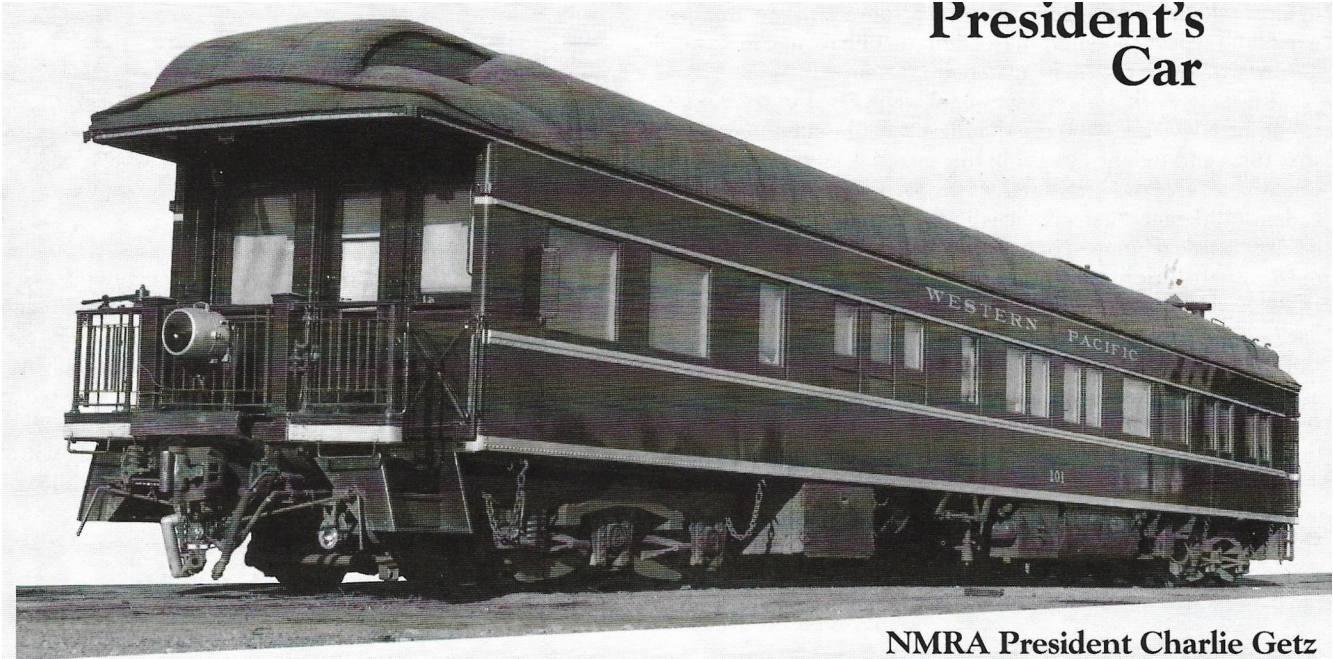
Send your ideas and recommendations to westdir@hq.nmra.org or mail them to

Jack Hamilton
10731 Warren Road NW
Silverdale, WA 98383.

2012 November

Making Progress!

President's Car



NMRA President Charlie Getz

Making Progress

This is my third editorial in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, and I want to update you on progress that is being made on a number of fronts. First, elsewhere in this issue you will find an article about the Gallery Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum. I will not repeat that information here, but there has never been a more important effort undertaken by the NMRA, in my opinion, than this exhibit. It is one of the best opportunities to get the word out about our hobby and attract not only new members to the NMRA but, more importantly, also new hobbyists. Please take the time to read the article and, more importantly, please, *please* contribute to this effort. I recognize that in the past you have been asked to contribute to any number of worthy projects undertaken by the NMRA. However, I can truly say without contradiction that none has been more important than this effort. If we succeed, we have a chance to attract significant new

numbers to our hobby. If we fail, then I feel that we may have missed an opportunity that only comes around once in a lifetime. Read the article and feel free to send your comments and responses to me.

I'm happy to report that significant progress has been made on one of the goals of my tenure to modernize and improve the NMRA. First, through the efforts of Vice President-Special Projects Bill Kaufman and new Information Technology Director Ben Sevier as well as the very talented individuals under his direction, the IT Department has been making progress toward improving our Web presence. These efforts will continue and expand into new means of communicating such as Facebook and Twitter. Ben is a professional in the field and administers IT for major companies. Having someone with his knowledge and professionalism volunteer for this effort is a huge step forward. Our very talented volunteers who are working with Ben deserve

special praise because of their responsiveness and flexibility in meeting a changing dynamic. The world of IT is under going change and evolution, and the NMRA must keep up with these changes.

Bill Kaufman is also working with a number of our talented volunteers in improving our communications. The *NMRA MAGAZINE*, which is read by most of our members, does not reach everyone. Some members elect not to receive the magazine for a variety of reasons. That does not mean that we should not attempt to communicate with them. Right now, we are looking to add to the communications arsenal an electronic/print newsletter that would be offered at a lesser cost than the magazine but would assist us in connecting with members who do not receive the magazine. This newsletter, which has a working title of "NMRA eBulletin," would provide interesting information about the organization and upcoming events. It would not contain

Making Progress!

the same features as the magazine, but would offer some connection to our members. It would not be offered at the same frequency as the magazine. These proposals are still in the formative stage, and I'll keep you up to date on them as we go forward.

Jim Six of the Michiana Division is chairing a committee to develop a comprehensive Education and Training Program under the Education Department of John Lowrance. Approved as a concept by the Board of Directors, Jim will present a formal proposal for this program at the next board meeting, and we will share the details of this exciting and innovative voluntary program with you in the future. A couple of comments in response to rumors that are already swirling: This program is not intended to replace local initiatives nor is it mandatory. Rather, it is an important and professional tool that we will be offering to Regions and Divisions to assist them in presenting clinics or other educational materials to members. Jim and his crew have the enthusiasm, experience, and initiative to provide a stunning arsenal of tools that can be utilized to improve our educational efforts. I am very excited about this development.

Progress is also being made on other technological fronts such as NMRANet. Moreover, the commercial press has begun to notice the evolution of "power on board," which is a revolutionary new technology allowing radio-controlled DCC battery-powered locomotives to operate without track power. Sometimes referred to as the "Dead Rail Society," this new technology promises a freedom of operation identical to that of the prototype. This technology is not driven by the model railroad industry, but by Silicon

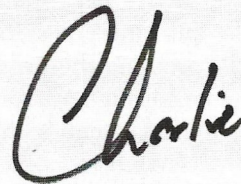
Valley, where I live, and by the miniaturization and improvement in battery technology. Already, wireless recharging stations or recharging through dedicated track sections is possible. At the appropriate time, the NMRA will address standards for this new technology, but this again demonstrates the need for the NMRA and its relevance in a dynamic and changing hobby.

Under the able leadership of marketing professionals Page Martin, Garrett Ewald, and Barrett Johnson, we are exploring innovative ways and programs to increase our membership and outreach to the hobby community. We will be introducing some very exciting ideas and benefits as a result of their efforts and advice.

So, we are making progress. We have a great crew of talented volunteers working hard for the NMRA, our hobby, and you. Stay tuned for updates on these and other exciting developments.

In other news, our librarian Brent Lambert has left to pursue other opportunities. Brent did some great work for us, and we wish him well. Diane on our staff will fill in for Brent for now.

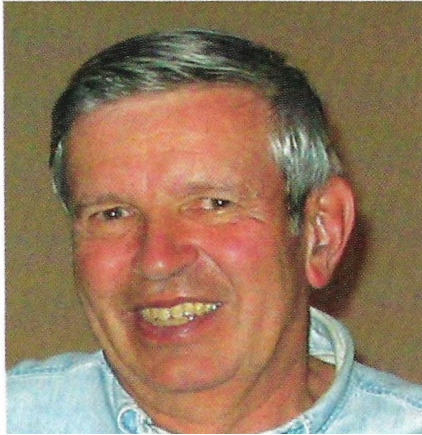
I thank you for the overwhelming positive responses to my first editorial. One reader did take me to task for being "arrogant" in setting ground rules! Well, hopefully, you did not think so because that was not my intent. Well, enough for now. As always, these are my thoughts – what are yours?

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie". The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'C' and a trailing flourish.

Keith Stuart Koch, MMR, of Montrose, Colorado, died on September 2 at age 69 from brain cancer. He is survived by his wife, Bonnie, sons Kurt, Craig, and Kevin; two granddaughters, and a brother.

Keith was born in St. Paul, Minnesota. He graduated from Hamline University with a BA in Political Science and Education and St. Cloud State University with an MS in Secondary Administration.

Keith taught middle school and high school English, geography, American his-



tory, and political science from 1966 to his retirement in 1999 during which time he served as Department Chair, president of the 700 member Mounds View Education Association, on the IMPACE Board of Directors (the political action committee of the Minnesota Education Association) and as a delegate to both the Minnesota Education Association and National Education Association conventions.

His interest in government and leadership skills led him into community endeavors including the Jaycees, delegate to Minnesota State Democratic Conventions, and campaign manager for a candidate running for the Minnesota House of Representatives. In retirement, he volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and served on various committees in his church.

Keith was an avid model railroader, earning a Master Model Railroader certificate from the National Model Railroad Association, MMR No. 228 effective February 1, 1995. He held eight certificates, Master Builder: Motive Power, Cars, Structures, and Scenery; Model Railroad Engineer Civil and Electrical; Association Volunteer; and Model Railroad Author. He taught many modeling classes at national conventions and had his home layout featured in national modeling magazines.

Keith combined his love of history and interest in railroads, becoming a lifetime member of the Ridgway Railroad Museum — participating in railroad restoration, conducting tours, serving as editor of the newsletter, and co-authoring with other members books on railroads in southwestern Colorado.

His family and myriad friends will miss Keith's quick smile and ever-present humor.

It all comes together

I am always amazed at how interaction between modelers works in the favor of all involved. As many of you know, my son, Joel, has been working on his MMR. His interest was spurred on at a very young age because Joel grew up around a large completely finished model railroad, two parents that are railroad authors, train magazine editors, and active railfans. To say the least, he came by it honestly. As the editor of this magazine I have pulled back a little in my coverage of his progress because I received a little flack from some members about how "easy" it has been for him to achieve. Well, I can tell you (and so will Joel), it has not been easy. Sure, he has a well-equipped shop and parents that are hardcore modelers, but that is it. Joel has paid for most of his projects out of his own pocket; he has done all the work himself, often having to redo projects that were not up to par, and most discouragingly he has had to work under two perfectionist parents. That was probably the most difficult part for him.

On a different note, Joel has also had lots of help apart from his parents. Allen McClelland and Tony Koester both provided support and original materials for Joel's Virginian & Ohio. Other modelers, too many to list, have gifted Joel with V&O rolling stock or unbuilt kits. I have been amazed at the outpouring of support in spite of the naysayers. Thank you all for helping a new modeler with a burning interest in modeling to thrive. (Paying it forward, Joel has fulfilled several requests from other modelers wanting to decal V&O rolling stock using his decals.)

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



In late October, I went over Joel's Achievement Program paperwork with him, and I am happy to share with you that he will probably have his MMR before his 13th birthday on January 11, 2013. Yes, a 12-year-old Master Model Railroader.

The real purpose of this editorial is to share with you that the MMR journey is a fantastic rewarding one that can be achieved by anyone. It takes time, effort, patience, perseverance, and a lot of friends/mentors. I can't say enough about mentors. Mentors helped me achieve my MMR, and now my son follows in my footsteps. Congratulations, Joel, and thank you NMRA for such a wonderful family-friendly program!

2013 January The Editor and his family are on the move!

Things are Moving!

As you read this magazine, we will hopefully be finishing up our move to a new home. The combination of our home-based publishing and design business, a growing teenage boy, and the interest to increase the size of our model railroad all have played a part in the need to relocate. Our new home is just south of the airport in Kansas City, Missouri. Any editorial material that is sent via UPS, USPS or FedEx should be sent to the following address:

**NMRA Magazine
c/o PRRP, Ltd.
14512 NW 73rd St.
Parkville, MO 64152**

The e-mail addresses, FTP site, and VPN addresses will remain as they are because we will be moving our existing servers to the new location. Material can always be sent to us via the internet. Our phone and fax lines will also remain the same.

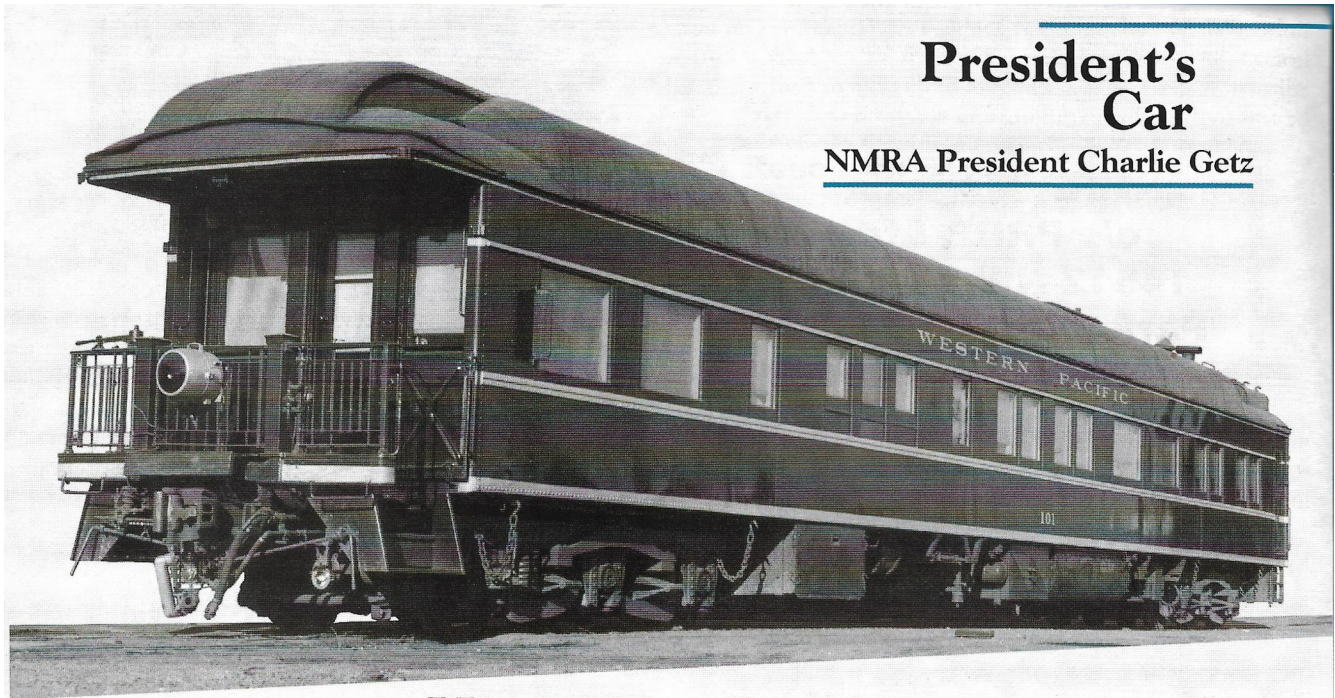
Now for the good stuff. With the move, Joel, Cinthia, and I will begin planning the new railroad. Our thoughts currently

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



reside around a fictitious Santa Fe route from Chicago to St. Louis to Kansas City — a route the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe always coveted. That line, however, was ignored because of the rush to build to the West Coast. Our new operations-oriented railroad will be HO scale and DCC with ample staging on each end. We now have enough room for a single-level design with at least two yards, one of those being a major terminal with an engine facility. Trains will travel through rural Missouri countryside, including the Missouri River Valley and the associated cliffs and hills. Stay tuned for future articles featuring our progress as the project takes wings.



President's Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

Happy New Year!

Happy New Year to all our members from the NMRA. Another year of enjoying the world's greatest hobby awaits. With this being a traditional time for resolutions, allow me to share my own.

First, I resolve to continue with our efforts to complete the Gallery Exhibit, "The Magic of Scale Model Railroading" at the California State Railroad Museum. I wrote about this extensively in the November issue. Hopefully you also received a letter requesting help on this all-important introduction to our hobby. Your tax-deductible contribution (for U.S. citizens) is the difference between this exhibit going forward or not. This exhibit remains one of the best ways to recruit new hobbyists and new members. We are more than halfway to meeting our fundraising goal, so it is crucial that you help us as your resources allow. Send your pledge or donation to headquarters or click on the link at our website. We need your help to make this happen.

Second, I resolve to redouble our efforts to modernize and improve our communications. We hope to announce the eBulletin soon, and our web presence is much improved.

Third, I resolve to announce new member benefits at no additional cost just as soon as we can work out the details. Some exciting prospects are in the works, so stay tuned.

Fourth, I resolve to keep up with changing technology and adopt new standards to insure continued interoperability. In that regard, we are working with the industry to resolve any incompatibility issues with existing products. This core function of the NMRA is critical to your enjoyment of the hobby.

Fifth, I resolve to re-emphasize that the National Model Railroad Association is a hobby organization intended to improve your enjoyment of model railroading! That means simplifying our Executive Handbook (EHB) and increasing our educational offerings.

Let's put the "model" back into Model Railroading!

Finally, I resolve to acknowledge that none of this would happen without Chief Administrative Officer Jenny Hendricks, our headquarters staff, the many volunteers who make the NMRA click, and certainly our members who continue to support this organization because it is vital to the hobby we all enjoy.

Those are my resolutions. One of them, however, is more of a "Grrrr" than a resolution! That is the subject of the rest of this column. At the Narrow Gauge Convention last September, I plugged the NMRA during the general assembly, extolling its benefits for narrow gaugers. For some unknown reason, there has always existed animosity among some narrow gaugers for the NMRA, despite the fact that some pretty prominent narrow gaugers are happy NMRA members.

Unfortunately, it is not just the narrow gauge community that professes to dislike the NMRA. With about 19,000

2013 January Random Topics from Charlie Getz Cont.

members, the NMRA attracts only about 10 percent of the serious model railroaders out there. That has always puzzled me! Why? Well, the NMRA is perceived as “political” by some, an “old boy’s network” by others, and an “HO organization” by a few.

All those perceptions are just *wrong*! You know, I wanted to title this piece, “It’s just a frigging hobby!” at one point because the NMRA is a hobby association. That is all it is or has ever been! It is not Congress or Parliament and is not political. Yes, we are a non-profit corporation, and we do need bylaws. But that does not convert us into a political organization. (Ironically, under American law, non-profits are forbidden from engaging in political activities!) So please do not act as if we pass laws, although we do adopt standards.

“Old Boy’s network”? Oh please! We have a very healthy turnover on the Board of Directors and among our officers and volunteers. Indeed, we often have trouble recruiting new volunteers to help. Charlie Getz, with all due respect, has never been accused of being part of a clique. The idea is laughable. What folks confuse with an old boy’s network is the occasional need for new assignments to go back to the same small pool of volunteers who actually do things. Under my administration, we are actively recruiting new talent to help spread the work out.

“HO organization.” Of all the complaints, this is the only one based on facts — a misreading of those facts. I believe about 80 percent of our members primarily model in HO. So naturally, a preponderance of articles and interests reflects that reality. But that does not mean the NMRA is an “HO” organization! Our mission statement, printed in each issue, reflects our even-handed commitment to “scale model railroading” — *all scales*! Our standards are adopted and benefit *all*

scales. Clinics and Data Sheets also assist all scales. On our Board and among our officers, you will find a healthy representation of nearly every scale and gauge. I model in HOn3, HO, and On3. In college, I modeled and built layouts in N scale. So please do not tell me we are an “HO organization.”

Let me ask a more basic question for those who do not profess to like the NMRA. Exactly how has the NMRA harmed model railroading? What damage have we done? What mischief have we caused? The answer is “none.” We have done far more good than harm over the years. Model railroading would exist without the NMRA having existed, but in a far different state. It is doubtful whether uniform standards or interoperability would be as universal as they are now. Do not make the mistake of assuming our work there is complete! It is also doubtful whether some of the advances would have been made without our support and encouragement. What club or local group could boast of a worldwide presence or the hosting of so many years of large and successful conventions or trade shows? What club or group could develop and offer the Achievement Program and have it universally recognized?

I offer these thoughts not in hubris but to illustrate the importance of the NMRA to the hobby we all love. So why do only 10 percent join? I have my own thoughts. What are yours?

I wish a happy new year to every one of you. Let’s make this year a memorable one for model railroading and the NMRA.



Alan Saatkamp earns Master Model Railroader 492.

2013 February



A Swiss Convention

The Atlantic District Promotes the NMRA

article and photographs by Nobby Clarke - Atlantic District Director

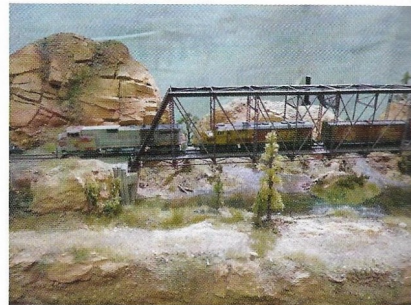
Switzerland is not a country that you would normally associate with North American model railroads. I was pleasantly surprised to find a thriving community of Swiss fans of American railroads who have just held the 15th and, perhaps, final convention in the Zurich suburb of Adliswil this past October. Werner Meer and his team have organized American railroad-themed conventions since the early 1980s. They should be very proud of their achievements, and if the numbers coming through the doors were anything to go by, this year's was yet another great success. Sadly, the 15th convention was to be the last. Werner feels its time to hand over the responsibility to a younger team. The trouble is, no one as of yet has come along to take the reins.

I became involved after Werner very kindly invited my team and me to bring the Atlantic District's publicity booth to the event. We met at a U.S. model railroad

school had a large assortment of buildings. The first thing that struck us as we walked into the main car park was the large, and I mean large, G gauge double track running around a good section of the parking lot. I have never before seen a 100-car doublestack train in G being pulled by a brace of locomotives — all with sound. It had taken the crew three full days to lay the woodwork that supported the entire track. None of my photographs do this wonderful setup justice.

Each of the main buildings holding the convention was full of model railroads of one sort or the other from top to bottom. Just when we thought we had seen everything there was to see, we found even more. It took me both days to get around the whole convention site, stopping to take photos and talk to the display owners. Thankfully, there were four of us to man the booth in shifts, which gave us a chance to rest and enjoy the convention. I was very impressed to see

Both below: Z scale dioramas by John Cubbins www.ztrains.com.



Above and right: "X street gang, West Coast switching" HO Scale by Alec Losch.

show in Rodgua, Germany, in 2011, where we had the NMRA Atlantic District booth on display. I think he was impressed that some Brits modeling American railroads would travel at their own expense to a show hundreds of miles away to share with other modelers the merits of NMRA membership.

We arrived at the school where the convention was to be held after flying in from the UK on late Friday afternoon. This big



the large number of people who came to support this event. I must admit that I have not seen this number of people for a purely American-railroad-themed event outside the USA. I think every scale and gauge were rep-

resented in one form or another. From what I saw, Z seems to be far bigger in Europe than anywhere else. I saw some very nicely weathered Z gauge. My apologies to all the other wonderful layout owners at the convention, but in my opinion, one of the best layouts I came across was an HO DCC layout with sound called "City Limits." Five young lads, all in their mid-30s, built the layout, and an incredible fact is that they can have the railroad fully set up only at shows. They rent a small apartment purely for building the layout, which is amazing in itself. I have never seen such detail on an exhibition layout, and I have seen my share.

Saturday evening, we were transported to the village hall in Adliswil for what was to be a memorable banquet. As one of the guests of honor, I had been asked to give a short speech about the NMRA. My speech came after the Lord Mayor of Adliswil and well-known modeler Pelle Soeborg. Pelle spoke about how he had gotten into model railroading. Thankfully, I presented the speech to the 500 present with little memory of doing so — nerves I suppose. I was very honored to be given an award by Werner for services toward furthering the modeling of

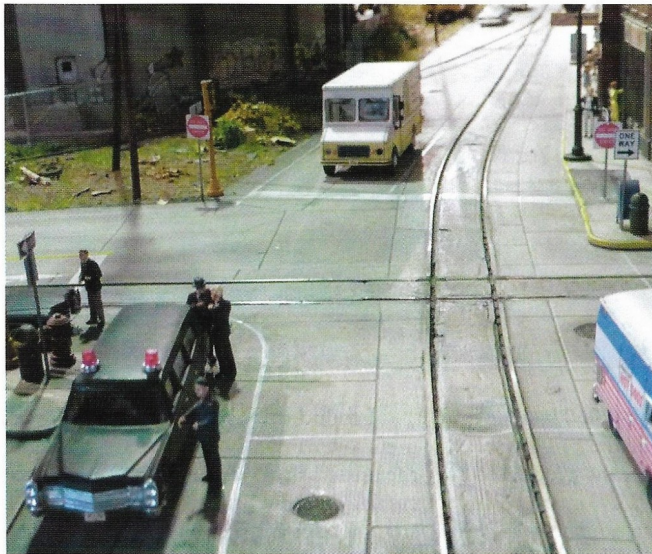
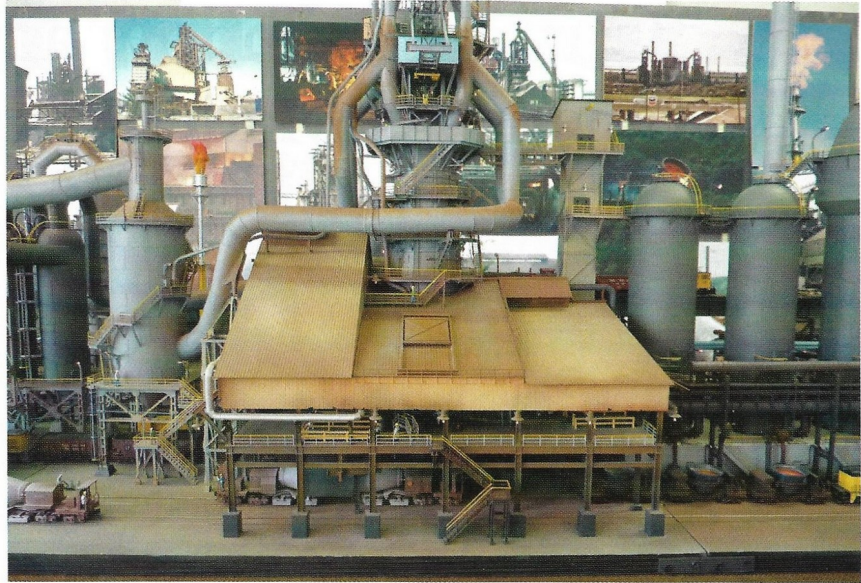
2013 February

A Swiss Convention Cont.

American railroads in Europe, which I will always cherish.

The convention was slightly less busy on Sunday. I have to admit, we were a little grateful for that after the incredible response we had to the NMRA booth the day before. Visitors showed plenty of interest in all things NMRA, especially the Achievement Program. The biggest thing I took from this whole experience is that modelers of American railroads are alive and kicking in Europe. People came there to share knowledge and skills with anyone who was willing to learn — nothing was too much trouble or a bother. To be honest, I found this very refreshing and a little bit humbling.

Shown here are but a few of the photos I took at the convention. (You can find more on the NMRA Facebook page.) The pictures can never do this wonderful event justice. Werner and his hard-working team



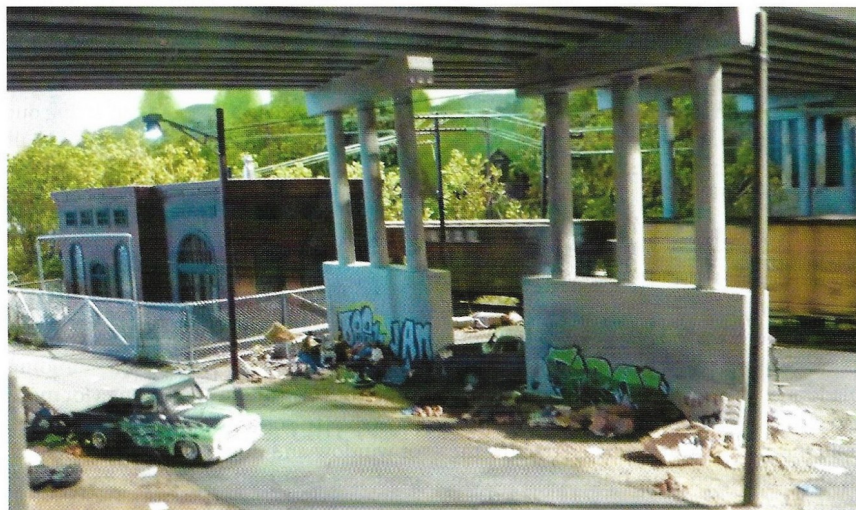
Top: HO steel works unknown modeler.

Above: "Time goes by" Micro layout in O by Hellertrain.

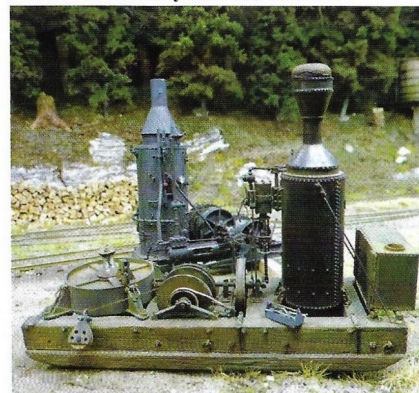
Below and Bottom Left: "City limits" HO layout build by five guys from Switzerland.

deserve a hearty congratulations and sincere appreciation after 20 years of service to the hobby. I owe a huge thank you to Werner Meer for inviting us, but also the other mad Brit volunteers who came with me at their own expense to support the NMRA: Barry, Barry, Pauline, and the big man from Luxembourg, Patrick Bopp (who supplied his models to display at the booth).

Thank you all. 🙏



Below: On3 model by unknown modeler.



2013 March

Joe Batson earned Master Model Railroader 475.

Ron Gribler earned Master Model Railroader 494.

2013 April

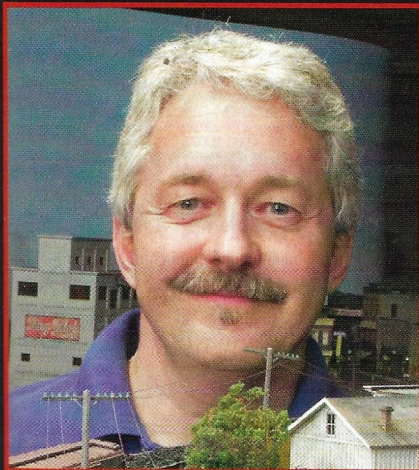
Joel Priest earned his Master Model Railroader 503 at the ripe old age of 12! Our record holder for youngest.

2013 May **eBulletin 1st Time!**

The eBulletin is the newest communication tool. Thanks to Gerry Leone, Page Martin and Ben Sevier for all of their efforts!

Sad news: John Roberts who had to step down from the National Board died in March.

NEW DIRECTOR, NEW OFFICER ANNOUNCED



GERRY LEONE, MMR



MIKE YURTEC

The NMRA Board of Directors has appointed Mike Yurtec the new At Large North American Director, a position vacated by Miles Hale, MMR. Mike resides in Sherman, Illinois, and is a Director of North America Railroad Products for a large hydraulics company. He was recently elected Vice President of the Midwest Region, and prior to that was District 5 Trainmaster for the Illinois Valley Division. Mike also served as Chairman of the "Railsplitter 2012" Midwest Region Convention Committee.

The Board has also confirmed the appointment of Gerry Leone, MMR, Vice President-Special Projects. Gerry served as NMRA Communications Director for five years, and prior to that was Deputy Chair of the NMRA's Member Services Department. He also served on the boards and edited the newsletters of the Thousand Lakes Region and Twin Cities Division. Gerry received the NMRA President's Award in 2010, and the Meritorious Service award in 2012. Gerry replaces Bill Kaufman, who resigned in mid-February.

William Paulsell earned Master Model Railroader 498.

2013 June

Don Ball earned Master Model Railroader 501.

Joseph Gelmini earned Master Model Railroader 502.

2013 July

KATHY MILLATT 1st LADY ELECTED NATIONAL BOARD. She is the Atlantic District Director.

Donald Ham earned Master Model Railroader 491.

Andrew J. Clermont earned Master Model Railroader 508.

2013 August

Bill Day earned Master Model Railroader 510.

2013 September

Nick Andrusiak Tribute

In Memoriam

On July 9, 2013, Nick Andrusiak died peacefully, comfortably, and at home as he wished, after 20 years of health, mobility, and comfort issues.

Nick loved trains and thought he wanted to model trains. When he joined the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club, he discovered that modeling trains can also involve organizations, printed materials, newsletters, and politics — he never quite got around to much modeling. Children were taught to collate newsletters as soon as they could reach the height of the kitchen table. He had just about every variety of office equipment in operation, including Gestetners (a duplicating machine), printers, and printing presses. One of the highlights of his life was being on the executive

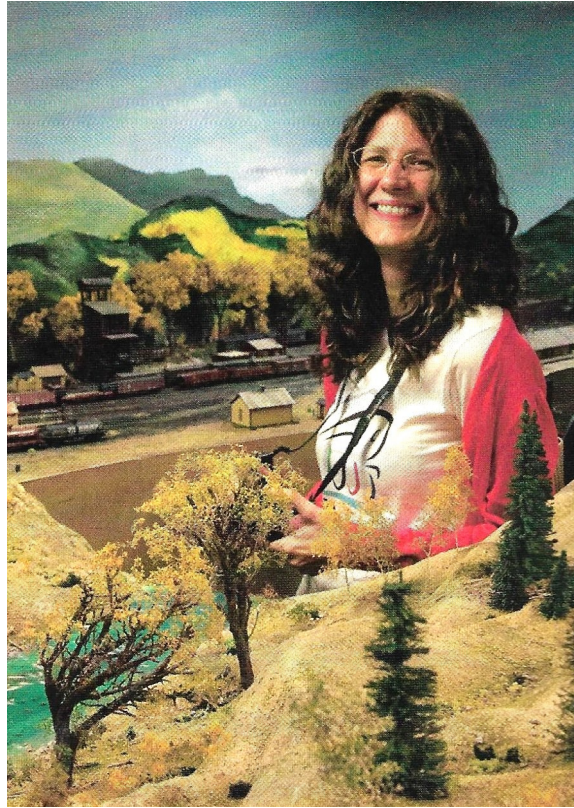


team that organized and ran the National Model Railroad convention in Winnipeg in 1983. That meet set many benchmarks, including event scheduling and the timetable booklet format.

Nick had to leave his teaching career at age 51 when he developed increasing paralysis related to spinal stenosis. Later, he developed Parkinson's. Nick demonstrated to us that life can be full. He volunteered with CNLines as managing editor for magazine and book publications. He joined Stafford Swain and Al Lill to spearhead many organizations and projects, which always ended up in the black. He also enjoyed doing petit point and cross-stitch, especially on train and pioneering themes. And Nick told stories, a new one to each new person that came in the door.

Nick will be dearly missed and remembered by many. He taught us so much, and we have much still to learn from him about grace and dignity in the face of immense challenges and suffering. He was truly a giant of a human being. 🙏

2013 September Kathy Milatt, Atlantic District Director, 1st lady



2013 September

Ron Baile earned Master Model Railroader 496.

Joseph Giuseppe earned Master Model Railroader 513.

Frank Markovich earned Master Model Railroader 514.

2013 October

Ed Brennan, Colonel, USAF (Retired) earned Master Model Railroader 499.

Midterm Progress Report / TVRM to buy Headquarters building

First, the very merriest and satisfying of holiday seasons to each and every one of you. It is always a magical time to be a model railroader. In this column, I would like to report on the goals and promises made when I assumed office as your President. Under our revised regulations, I serve a three-year term. I began in the summer of 2012 and thus, this month marks my halfway point. In my first column in the NMRA Magazine, I outlined five areas I hoped to emphasize: modernization, communication, integration, conformance, and program/function re-examination. We have made significant progress in all areas although much remains to be done.

Modernization. How we do business is changing. The bylaws are slowly being redrafted to simplify and better define the distinction between our not-for-profit corporate side and our hobby association side. For too long that line has been blurred to the point that we define everything equally in ways that frankly are confusing and unnecessary. By the end of my term, I hope to complete this process. Further, I have used Special Assistants under my supervision on particular programs that do not fall within an existing Department. This provides flexibility and accountability.

Communication. Here we have made great strides thanks to Gerry Leone, MMR, and his crew, Ben Sevier, Page Martin, Tom Draper, MMR, HLM, and Stephen Priest, MMR. The NMRA Magazine continues to improve and thrive. The new NMRA eBulletin has been well received. The Infoblast continues to provide information to Regions. The Gallery Exhibit is entering its fabrication stage. Next month I will report on that exciting development in more detail. Our website is slowly improving and being revamped. As I write this, "Build A Memory" pilot program looks to be a success that we hope to expand next year into a broader effort. Indeed, our new Marketing Department has been stellar in promoting the NMRA. Alan Anderson continues his

fund raising efforts on our behalf. And we have begun EduTRAIN®, our template for a program of clinics to assist Regions and divisions in educating members on a wide range of topics. Started by Jim Six of the Michiana Division, Bob Blake is now overseeing this exciting new program.

Integration. This means that for U.S. Regions/Division, tax-exempt status under our umbrella would be provided with a minimum of paperwork and with complete local control over finances and activities. We only await a final ruling from the IRS and clarification of the procedures to be used to launch this program. We will keep you informed as soon as we know.

Conformance. In 2006, the BOD authorized a self-certification program to encourage the industry to obtain conformance warrants in a manner and timing that suited their needs and that did not rely on our few overburdened volunteers. At my request, Standards and Conformance Department Manager Di Voss has developed procedures and forms to accomplish this goal. I met with industry leaders in Atlanta to explain our goals and the importance to them to conform. After all, without conformance, their products simply will not work with those of other manufacturers. Setting and enforcing standards is a cornerstone of the NMRA. Of course, our primary mission remains education. Over time, I hope the manufacturers will see the advantages of not only obtaining a conformance warrant but in proudly displaying it in packaging and advertising. Athearn

President's Car



NMRA President Charlie Getz

for example, is to feature the warrant on its packaging. Hopefully, others will follow as they see the advantage in reassuring their customers that their products will work with others. At mid-year, I will ask the BOD to ratify this program and its procedures so we can begin to educate the community about this program. One day, I hope that no model railroader would consider buying a product that does not conform to our standards.

Re-examination of Programs and Functions. We have looked critically at what we do and how we do it. As earlier reported, the Kalmbach Library is in the process of being moved to the California State Railroad Library to be administered there at the same or less cost than we have spent. With this our members gain access to the largest railroad library west of the Mississippi and one of the largest in the world. We are taking steps to insure a dedicated partial position to serve our members' research needs...and all this at no additional cost to you. I will continue to report progress as we finalize arrangements.

Sometimes, changes in focus and priorities over time align with new opportunities in very favorable ways. We have entered such a time with our plans for the Gallery Exhibit and possible Library consolidation at the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) as those decisions affect our Headquarters building in Chattanooga.

Thirty years ago, NMRA leadership had a vision to create a monument to model railroading. At the time, the vision was

that a central headquarters building would be a strong signal to the membership. It would provide a location for the Howell Day Model Railroading Museum and the A.C. Kalmbach Library. The plan also included space for the day-to-day operations of the organization to provide member support for planned growth of a much larger world-wide organization.

Several alternatives were explored before the current location in Chattanooga, Tennessee, was chosen, primarily because of an attractively priced land parcel offered by the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM). A successful member fund-raising campaign allowed the NMRA to construct its headquarters and soon, NMRA had a headquarters building.

Fast-forward 30 years. The founding visions have not become a reality in the way that was planned, but have evolved with even better options. Over the period 2010–2012, the NMRA and the CSRM jointly explored the exciting possibility of creating a Gallery and/or Museum of Scale Model Railroading. We now have an agreement to establish the Magic of Scale Model Railroading exhibit on the gallery level of the country's largest and most visited railroad museum, the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento, California. It attracts more than 600,000 visitors each year while our HQ building typically has fewer than 100 visitors each year. CSRM has also expressed a serious interest in administering the NMRA library collections with the CSRM collection as a co-operative venture and to establish a joint researcher position to answer member research questions as we do today. This new and better plan will provide additional benefits for our members as they will all also become members of the CSRM Library and have full access to it.

In 2011, we developed a plan and started a fundraising drive for the gallery exhibit as a first step. The fundraising has been very successful and we have raised more than \$500,000 in cash and pledges thus far. We have signed a contract for construction of the initial exhibits and the opening is planned for late 2014. One day,

we can expand this exhibit into a permanent museum in different dedicated space as resources become available.

As a result of these positive developments, we now have a building that is underutilized and will become even more so after the Museum and Library are moved to CSRM. Our core operations will need significantly less space than we have today. We have been looking at options to address this reality.

In January 2013, the TVRM, our neighbor, approached us and asked if we might consider selling them the building. We did not solicit their request. They were aware of our developing plans with the CSRM. They are severely cramped for space as they expand their commercial operations and were looking to construct significant additional office and classroom space at their Cromwell Road location, adjacent to the NMRA. Acquiring an existing building would be of great benefit to TVRM. Their operations personnel are spread across the region, and they want to consolidate into fewer and centralized locations. And as Chief Administrative Officer Jenny Hendricks can tell you, nearly every day, someone wanders in to buy tickets for the TVRM!

The NMRA BOD discussed this exciting and unsolicited opportunity at the Winter 2013 BOD meeting and authorized the CFO to determine whether a mutually agreeable sale might be possible. After several months of negotiations, we arrived at a mutually agreeable price and set terms and conditions. In July 2013, TVRM presented a formal offer to the NMRA. The NMRA BOD accepted the offer, and the NMRA CFO was authorized to complete the transaction. TVRM is ready to complete the sale in a timely fashion. At press time we do not have a firm closing date, so watch for future announcements here or via the NMRA eBulletin or Infoblast.

The NMRA still needs a central location to manage the organization's business, merchandise sales, membership records, the online archives, and some elements of the Library and Museum collections. We

2013 December

Joseph Nichols Jr. earned Master Model Railroader 511.

2014 January

A New Year; New Opportunities

The happiest of Holiday Seasons to you all! With a New Year upon us, we are entering a new era for the NMRA. This year will see the fruition of actions taken by the Board of Directors (BOD) and Executive staff over the past years. As I explained in my last column, also in our last eBulletin, the plans I announced when I took office in July 2012 are well underway. In this column, I would like to continue my “mid-term” report, which started last issue.

In that column, I outlined a number of initiatives and where we stand on those. I received far more responses than normal, with many supportive messages. Thanks for those. By far, the sale of Headquarters building to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM) garnered the most reaction. Of the more than 70 comments received by press time, only three were opposed. The majority of our members understand that after 30 years and changes in conditions and technology, the large building on Cromwell Road was no longer vital to our needs. How wonderful that it fulfills the needs of our neighbor, the TVRM. The building will continue to honor all of you who helped build it so many years ago and continue to serve railroading — a fitting tribute. Like some of you, I felt a pang at the change, but know in my heart it is the right thing to do as we move forward. As with Bob Bast’s basement, our former “home” for many years, Cromwell Road served our needs and now enjoys a new life with TVRM.

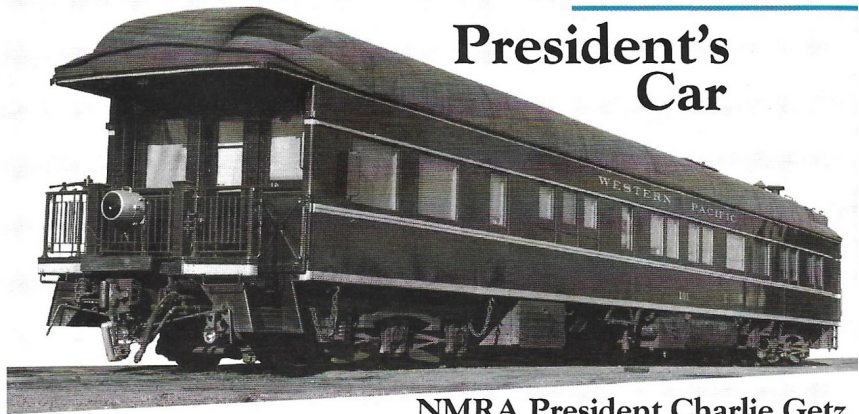
Please note our new address, a suburb of Chattanooga. Our office has moved and the Post Office box insures we will receive all our mail, even on holidays and weekends. Our Chief Administrative Officer, Jenny Hendricks, and crew enjoy their new space and are back at work. Jenny and Chief Financial Officer, Frank

Koch, made the transition seamless. They all deserve our thanks.

The Gallery Exhibit project at the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM) continues to move forward as well. We hope to have it open this year — ambitious, but do-able. We have selected Displayworks of Irvine California as our fabricator. At press time, we were awaiting the final paperwork from the CSRM to get started. Although we have raised more than \$500,000 in pledges and donations, not all pledges have been redeemed and we need more money to complete this project. We always estimated it would cost between \$500,000 and \$750,000 to complete/implement. The contract is for \$500,000 but that only includes final design and fabrication. A variety of costs are not included. Thus, we still face a formidable challenge to meet this goal. You may have already received or shortly will receive, a letter asking for that help. You have been very generous. We have sufficient funds to start, but we do not have the money to finish. Please help us even if you already have. By the way, that includes me. I pledged \$1,000 and will send more. Help us show the best in Model Railroading to more than 600,000 visitors a year. Help us keep this hobby vibrant and healthy. This is your chance to be a part of preserving our hobby.

There is nothing new to report on the Kalmbach Memorial Library move, but

President’s Car



NMRA President Charlie Getz

all continues to look positive. Again, we await final paperwork from the CSRM. I am very excited because we all will benefit from having not only continued access to our own collection but to the huge collection of the CSRM library. Since most requests come from e-mails or phone calls, there should be no disruption or change. We will have a designated person to serve NMRA members as we currently have with Headquarters — another “win-win” for the NMRA.

Director Jack Hamilton, MMR, and his committee continue to work on our latest Long Range Plan (LRP), “NMRA 2018.” At mid-year this February, the BOD will spend an extra day discussing and refining this plan. Jack has wisely built the LRP upon those plans adopted before. I was a former Chair of one such LRP that led to the reforms in structure of the NMRA some years back. I know how much work is involved. I also recognize how important it is for any organization to plan for the future in a changing world. One interesting topic is our mission statement, which is reproduced in each issue of the magazine above the President’s Car. We made a conscious decision that while we recognize and welcome anyone considering themselves a “model railroader,” our focus in programs and actions is on “scale” model railroading. There are two excellent organizations serving Toy Trains (also called “tinplate”) and collecting of

2014 January New Year With New Opportunities...

the same. Each one defines itself as serving the “toy train” community. Thus, we envision the NMRA as serving the “scale” model railroad community. We do so regardless of the scale used. Does that mean we offer nothing to the toy train aficionado? No. However, we also do not cater to them in our programs or activities. Any organization must define itself and how it differs from other similar organizations. Just serving “model railroaders” seems too vague and general. What does that mean after all? Any model railroading? That debate will continue, and we do appreciate your thoughts. I hope we will keep our focus on the scale model railroad community; that definition is broad and general enough to cover a lot of modelers.

My reworking and simplification of the Executive Hand Book (EHB) continues at a slow pace but it will be done by the end of my term. Our rollout of “Build-a-Memory” went well this past November. Due to unexpected complications, we ran a pilot program but hope to expand that next year. We remain very excited about this program and other initiatives in the works. Whether it is a member discount program, self-certification for manufacturers, or vertical integration for tax-exempt status, a lot of dedicated volunteers are working very hard to add more value your NMRA dues. They all deserve your thanks and support.

Finally, one of the joys of this job is the opportunity to attend some Regional, Divisional, and other model railroad events. This past fall, my wife, Margaret, and I attended the Mid-East Region (MER) Convention in Rockville, Maryland, and the Railroad Prototype Modelers (RPM) Meet in Naperville, Illinois. The MER was one of the best Regionals I have attended. Congrats to the hard-working committee and the many volunteers who make such a convention possible. MER held not only a regional BOD and membership meeting, but also a breakfast for all Division officials to compare notes. Bravo! For me, the chance to attend outstanding clinics and

visit world-class layouts is a home run, and the MER delivered on both. I saw some layouts I had dreamt of seeing for years such as Severna Park near Baltimore. A special treat was lunch at “Steak in a Sack,” where I used to eat more than 50 years ago when I lived in Maryland. Camp Springs, Maryland, is the town in which I became a model railroader at the tender age of 13 on Christmas 1961. The lunch was just as good as I remembered. Thanks MER for an unforgettable convention, for your hospitality, and for all the memories.

A week later, Margaret and I attended the RPM Meet in Naperville. The grandfather of the RPM Meets, this one attracts very serious and very talented modelers from all over the world. Organizer Joe Delia invited me to present a seminar on the NMRA as well as an update on the Gallery Exhibit. Both went well. We hope to build closer relations with the RPM modelers in the future. Already, a number of RPM meets, such as at Cocoa Beach, Florida, later this month, are joint RPM/NMRA meets. The RPM community, as well as the Narrow Gauge community, is an important part of scale model railroading, and we share much common ground. More importantly, we can learn from each other. As with the MER convention, it was great to see some old friends and meet new ones at the RPM meet. What a diverse and wonderful hobby we share, and what excellent modeling!

A lot is happening and a lot remains to be accomplished. We are on the move and in the right direction. With your help and support, we will continue on the road to a brighter future for our hobby and for the NMRA. Thanks for your ideas and for your support.

Those are my thoughts — what are yours?



2014 January Mike Chandler earned MMR 489.

2014 February
2014 March

Roger Walker earned MMR 506.
WHY DID THE NMRA SELL HQ?

Why Was I Not Told?

We recently completed our mid-year Board of Directors meeting, and we will report on that shortly. In this column, I would like to step back and let two from our leadership team address some questions raised. As I mentioned in December's column, the overwhelming reaction to the sale of the headquarters building, the Gallery Exhibit at the California Railroad Museum, and the Kalmbach Library move has been positive. However, a few members have questioned these decisions, with a few decrying the lack of notice and inability to vote or have a say on any of these decisions. In effect, the common thread is, "Why was I not told?" A parallel thread is a concern that the NMRA will lose control of the Kalmbach Library or Gallery Exhibit or even its digitalized images (the Diamond Club). All of us at the NMRA respect differing opinions and welcome those. We believe every member has the right to an answer that is open and honest. Let me summarize these inquiries and rather than answer them, refer to responses written by Central District Director Pete Magoun and Chief Financial Officer Frank Koch.

A few members stated they had just found out that the NMRA Headquarters was sold and the new headquarters was in a building in an industrial area in Soddy Daisy, Tennessee. Some were contributors to the building of the Cromwell Road Headquarters building and were concerned they had no opportunity to comment or vote on the sale.

Another member noted he and other members were asked to pay \$750,000 for an exhibit in the California State Railroad Museum, but does this mean CSRM will own the exhibit? Others questioned the source of the money to convert the slide collection to a digitalized version, or control and access after the possible move of the Kalmbach Library to Sacramento. The common thread of these comments seems

to be a concern that these actions were done in total secrecy or that the NMRA will no longer own or control the collections.

Here is Pete's reply to these concerns:

Let's start from my beginning. I joined the NMRA in 1973, when things were indeed run from Bob Bast's basement, Whit Towers was on his "biffy" kick, and after a couple of years of this, I wondered why I should continue to support the organization. Just as I was about to say "enough," something useful would show up and I hung on. I went through the whole "we gotta build a Headquarters" process, including donating to that cause. As you know, it was a very personal issue on many fronts, and having a building was, at the time, one of the things that was seen to legitimize the organization. So, off the NMRA went, built the building, eventually burned the mortgage and moved on.

Life has evolved. We now do business in ways we couldn't imagine 30 years ago; even Dick Tracy's futuristic "Two Way Wrist TV" is a reality right now. The HQ building is now more than 30 years old, and was complete with the financial drain on NMRA resources involved in maintaining a 30-year-old, pre-Internet structure. As for not telling membership, you may recall that Mike Brestel, in one of his President's Columns in SCALE RAILS back in 2007, discussed the possibility of the sale of the building, which we were not using, and had never used, to its potential.

President's Car



NMRA President Charlie Getz

The "Sell HQ" issue has been a possibility for years.

Fast forward to 2013. The TVRM, which needs more space, approached the NMRA Board with an inquiry on buying the building. The NMRA Board, recognizing that there were a number of issues to be resolved before any decisions were made, had the property professionally appraised and went through the due diligence process to evaluate the possibilities. Given the fact that the ways in which we do business have changed significantly since the days of Bob's basement, and that we were rattling around in a pre-Internet building with a lot of extra (and expensive) space, with a very, very small number of members visiting the building, it made no economic or financial sense to continue to occupy that space. An unsolicited "friendly" offer to purchase the space was beneficial to both the NMRA and the TVRM. The offer we received, negotiated, and accepted was a win-win for both organizations.

We made the decisions related to moving "in total secrecy," because as a major financial transaction involving real property, there are a lot of variables in play, and none of us wanted to jeopardize what could be a win-win solution for both the NMRA and the TVRM. The TVRM requested that we keep the process confidential until they were able to line things up on their end. Confidentiality, incidentally, is the most common process used in real estate transactions, especially commercial ones, so this was not an under-the-table deal. If it had

been, I would have voted against it, and if it went through, would have resigned in a very public manner. Nothing in the process was announced because we had no news to announce until the sale was complete, at which point we put out an electronic news blast. While "Soddy Daisy" may not be the most attractive name for the new location, it is a growing area of Chattanooga, and it should provide a safe, secure working space for the HQ staff, which is important. The HQ office staff was heavily involved in the selection process; the new space meets their needs quite nicely. It's also less expensive, which is a good thing too.

On to the CSRM process, very few NMRA members used the NMRA HQ building or made use of its library. Having the CSRM library administer our library, while giving NMRA members access to the much larger CSRM library at no charge, again makes good financial sense. The CSRM is the third most popular tourist attraction in California, behind Disneyland and Sea World. California, for all of its foibles and public issues, also has the eighth largest economy on the planet. Sacramento is accessible, and with more than 600,000 visitors a year the CSRM is a major showcase for railroading, and thus, model railroading. It's also the only venue willing to give us free space for the exhibit. The NMRA exhibit there is funded by donations, in part, from NMRA members, yes, but will be run as a separate corporation from the NMRA, with separate financials and so on, and enjoys substantial support from non-NMRA donors. While the space that the exhibit occupies belongs to the CSRM, the exhibit itself belongs to the NMRA. That is also true for the library resources; CSRM will administer it for us, not "own it."

More and more information is digitized every day, so physical access to the material is not as much of an issue as it has been in years past; the City of Portland, Maine, for instance, announced that it now has 30,000 digital images of 1920s Portland available on the Web through the Maine Memory Network. The NMRA

"Diamond Club," of which I am a member, is an effort to capture as many images as possible before those images are lost to the ages. We own those images. Similarly, having NMRA members allowed access to the CSRM databases at no extra charge is a good deal for the NMRA. In other words, think of this as a major expansion of resources available for your NMRA membership, and not as the NMRA dumping its library.

I realize that all of this may sound like "Party Line," but I deplore those sorts of games, and don't play them. Each of the Board members and Officers has a legal fiduciary obligation to make decisions that are in the best interests of the organization, and we take those obligations very seriously indeed. I am proud to serve with the current Board, and hope to continue to do so. For the record, we've had more than 75 comments to date on the sale and the process; of these, only four have been negative.

Pete Magoun

Central District Director

Frank Koch, NMRA's CFO, was tasked by the BOD with the negotiations and sale of the Chattanooga property. He and Jenny Hendricks, our Chief Administrative Officer, were responsible for the difficult task of locating a new facility and moving the massive amount of "stuff" at headquarters. He added these comments to what Pete wrote:

Let me expand a bit on Pete's comments, all of which are true. We have six total employees in a two-story office complex in Soddy Daisy, which sits adjacent to temperature-controlled storage for Library, online archive, and Museum collections — everything we had before on Cromwell Road except at significantly less cost and with greater flexibility. The appearance of the exterior shell is irrelevant, it is the functionality of the space that is critical, and this new space works much better for us. The Museum collections are safely stored, the Library is fully functional, and we still address all member research requests. The office staff manages interactions with almost 20,000 members, and they made the

2014 March

WHY DID THE NMRA SELL HQ? Cont.

transition with no disruptions. We still have the Company Store so we can sell merchandise to our members.

Every example above, whether the Cromwell Road building and library, Gallery exhibit at CSRM, and Diamond Club (digitizing) were and are all voluntary donation programs for those who wished to support the specific project. No member dues were used for any of them.

Our co-operative work with CSRM is just that — co-operative. The NMRA retains ownership of all materials and exhibits. We decide what we place there and how it is displayed. CSRM has no ownership in any of the materials or displays. The NMRA benefits

through exposure to numbers of people that would never be realized in Chattanooga.

This is a big change for the organization, but should hardly be a surprise...other than it actually happened. The stars had to align just right, and they did to the mutual benefit of the TVRM and the NMRA.

Frank Koch
NMRA CFO

I felt it important that you hear these viewpoints not just from me but from a respected member of the BOD and our CFO. I also want to thank the members who wrote for their questions and honesty. It is important that we hear and discuss all rational viewpoints. If you have a ques-

tion or opinion, write me or any officer or member of our Board. You may not always agree with the answer, but you will always receive one that is as honest and open as we can provide. We never begrudge such comments or questions. If you feel that way, so may others. While I am glad that the overwhelming number of comments has been positive, the handful of negative comments is still important and should not be ignored. Hence, this column.

Those are my thoughts — what are yours?

Charlie

2014 March

Gayle M. Olsen, MMR 113, Tribute

In Memoriam

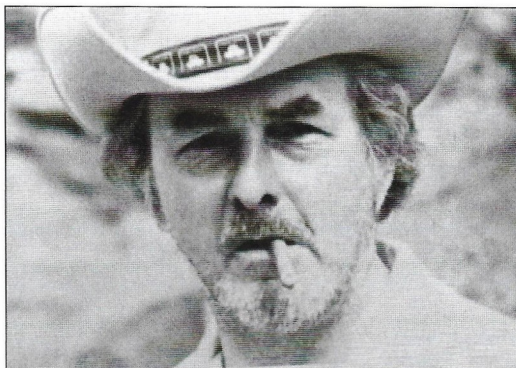
Gayle M. Olson, MMR113

By Mike Engler

Gayle Olson, MMR, died at age 83 on December 13, 2013. Gayle was a former President of the Thousand Lakes Region (1971–72), and was on the region board of directors for several years. He also held several offices at the national level, including Plains Vice-President and also Chairman of the Site-Selection Committee for the NMRA Headquarters.

Gayle is survived by his wife, Dee; daughter, Debbie; and grandchildren, Andrew and Sara, and also by business and hobby friends all over the world. He graduated from the University of Minnesota. His college education was interrupted when he became a soldier, serving his country with the U.S. Army in Korea. He had a highly successful business career with State Farm Insurance.

Gayle worked hard at living life to the fullest, and he had the most diverse interests of any one I have ever known. He studied comedy and comedians and became skilled at getting his “one-liners” into most presentations and conversations. He was an accomplished musician on several instruments. On several occasions, he sat in with professionals like the Stan Kenton Band when they were in Minneapolis.



He liked to race things, and I helped pit-crew several adventures, including motorcycle racing, dirt-bike motocross racing, sail boat and professional power-boat racing, and engineer on 1:1 steam and diesel locomotives. He loved flying his own plane and was a commercial pilot for several years. Gayle was a sports enthusiast and ardent fan of the Twins, Vikings, and Gophers. He loved to tell people that he played in the very first Minnesota State High School Hockey Tournament, and the rink in the St. Paul auditorium had “square” corners.

Gayle was an accomplished investor, and he wrote several software programs on investing, as well as many articles and books. He founded and was president of three very successful investment clubs, and he was a teacher and adviser for the National Association of

Investment Clubs. He was also a very talented photographer, and he won many contests with his black and white photos, several of which were published.

I met Gayle well over 40 years ago at a hobby shop, and he invited me to lunch with him and three other friends (one of whom was another MMR, and also a former NMRA President — Gene Hickey). This was the first of more than 2,000 lunches I shared with Gayle and a changing cast of other “bunch for lunch club” model railroaders at “greasy spoons” located near Twin Cities’ hobby shops. In addition to being a great friend, Gayle was certainly my modeling mentor. He invited me to join two model railroad clubs, and we had many hours of fun in both. We also traveled together to at least six National NMRA Conventions, four National Narrow Gauge Conventions, and more than 50 NMRA regional conventions, most of which were in the TLR.

Gayle was a very accomplished modeler, and he scratchbuilt just about everything he built. On the way to becoming a Master Model Railroader, he built and completed three layouts. His eye for detail and his ability to create “mini-scenes” puts him in a very select class of model builders.

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William E. McKean II Tribute

William E. McKean II

(by Alan Saatkamp, MMR)

NMRA Life member Bill McKean died on December 30, 2013, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, at the age of 69.

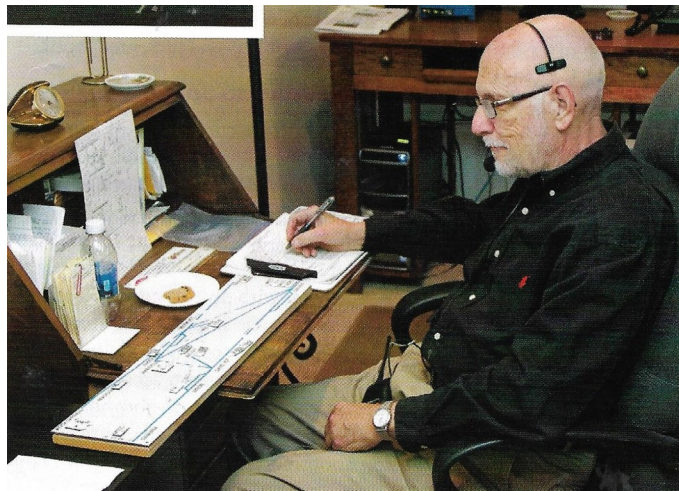
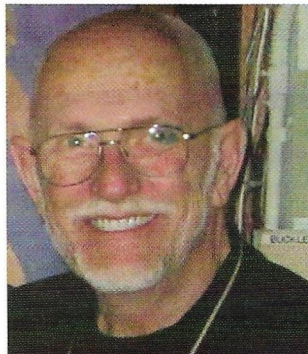
Bill was active in the NMRA Thousand Lakes Region, serving as convention director from 1986–1989 and president during 1990. He was a founding member of the Dakota Southeastern Division and served as Superintendent in 1995.

He also founded McKean Models, which produced HO-scale hoppers and boxcars. Bill was a leader in producing plastic cars featuring separately applied details such as handrails, grab irons, and ladders — a trend that spread among other manufacturers and is still prevalent today.

Bill was an avid model railroad author and hobbyist. His articles appeared in *Mainline Modeler* and *Model Railroading*. Locally, he and a Round Robin group met nearly every weekend during the past 20-plus years, creating several model railroad layouts. These included his own Lakeland Western HO lay-

out that featured highly detailed scenery and scratchbuilt structures. Bill was a regular crew member at area operating sessions the past several years.

DCCconcepts



You've heard about "EduTRAIN®," but what is it? NMRA EduTRAIN® is several things.

It is a program intended to help the NMRA better fulfill its charter objective of providing education and training for model railroaders.

It will become the first complete curriculum of re-usable turnkey clinics covering all aspects of model railroading from kit building to scenery, electricity and electronics, layout construction, scenery, and operations. NMRA EduTRAIN® clinics will include traditional presentations as well as demonstration labs and hands-on (Make and Take) workshops where the primary objective is to teach. When fully implemented, NMRA EduTRAIN® will allow a model railroader to progress through all phases of model railroading, according to their interests, from novice to Master Model Railroader.

It will include clinics to train model railroaders to become more comfortable and proficient at delivering presentations (Train the Trainers).

NMRA EduTRAIN® is being offered by the NMRA as a recommended practice, not a mandatory requirement. Once approved, clinics will be available through the NMRA to Regions and Divisions for pre-

sentation at official NMRA events. NMRA EduTRAIN® does not include or replace other informational clinics such as layout tours, travelogues, or general information on railroad practices at NMRA events. If you have a favorite clinic, NMRA EduTRAIN® does not render it obsolete. However, if you have a clinic that does a particularly good job of teaching other modelers how to do something related to model railroading, *and* you are willing to consider some rework to fit the NMRA EduTRAIN® model, we would like to talk to you.

NMRA EduTRAIN® evolved from the Michiana Division School of Model Railroading, where it has been used successfully at the Division level. It was proposed to the National organization, accepted, and is continuing to evolve into a rich curriculum of clinics.

Let's look at these elements in a little more detail.

Provide Education and Training

One of the charter objectives of the NMRA was to help members learn about model railroading and improve their skills to become better model railroaders. Historically, this has been accomplished through clinics at various NMRA events at the Divisional, Regional, and National lev-



EduTRAIN®

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Above: NMRA EduTRAIN® is a registered trademark of the National Model Railroad Association.

els. These clinics have included presentations about various facets of model and prototype railroading and demos or hands-on workshops. However, these clinics have tended to reflect the interests and talents of presenters who were available for each individual event and did not necessarily cover the broad range of modeling topics listed above. Regional and National conventions tended to draw from a larger audience and could attract more presenters, including many well-known modelers. Divisional events usually drew presenters from a more limited area. Nowhere in the NMRA history has there been an effort to develop and capture a complete curriculum of clinics covering all aspects of model railroading with consistent high quality in a way that they could be reused. This is, and will be, an ambitious objective.

Establishing a broader curriculum of clinics, covering more aspects of the hobby and ensuring a consistent level of quality, allows more clinics to be more easily and widely available to NMRA events at all levels. NMRA EduTRAIN® is the first effort by the NMRA to provide a more complete and more consistent level of quality for use at any NMRA event. NMRA EduTRAIN® will also make it possible for any Divisional or Regional convention to draw from a central repository of presentations created by knowledgeable members and presented locally.

Incentive to Join the NMRA

A complete curriculum of consistent high quality clinics is one more real reason for model railroaders to join the organization. Model railroading, as we all know, is a hobby with many different facets. Many new or casual model railroaders simply are not familiar with prototype practices or do not possess basic model railroading skills. Modelers interested in modeling earlier times may not have ready access to accurate information or may not know how to find it, and because of increased security, learning about current railroad activity is not



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Now Arriving on Track 1, EduTRAIN! Cont.

nearly as easy as it used to be. By providing a program that allows those interested in the hobby to become more knowledgeable and proficient by working with, and learning from experts, the NMRA can offer a distinct reason to join the organization.

Curriculum

The complete curriculum will include the following major areas, and each area will include clinics from introductory through intermediate to advanced.

- Introduction to Model Railroading (Model Railroading 101)
- Model Building
 - “Shake the box” to Advanced kits, Kitbashing and Scratchbuilding
 - Rolling Stock and Structures
- Using Useful Tools Safely
- Layout Planning and Construction
 - Develop a concept, design the layout, construct the room, and consider aesthetics
 - Modular Layouts (Free-mo, NTRAK)
- Basic Electricity, Wiring, and Soldering for Model Railroaders
- Track Laying — Best practices for keeping trains on the rails and realistic appearance
- Making it Realistic
 - Different Techniques for Scenery, Backdrops, and Weathering
- Maintenance — Best practices to keep trains running well and improving Ready-to-Run (RTR) models
- Advanced Electronics
 - DCC, Decoders, Detection and Signaling, Useful Circuits, and Electronics
- Operations
 - Car Movements, Train Movements, Signaling, Dispatching, JMRI
 - Operating methodologies: TT/TO, CTC, DTC, Track Warrants, etc.
- Prototype Operations
 - Modeling industries and customer operations realistically
- Research — Sources for Information, including Internet, Historical Societies, the NMRA library, etc.
- Photography — Prototype (safely and legally) and Model



• Training the Trainers

This is a preliminary curriculum and subject to change.

Methodology

NMRA EduTRAIN® incorporates Systematic Approach to Training (SAT), a teaching methodology that has been used successfully for many years by government, industry, the military, and education to teach essential knowledge and skills. This methodology relies on sound teaching methods to ensure the successful transfer of information from teacher to student. Simply stated, the methodology starts with a task analysis: what are the tasks that a modeler needs to perform to accomplish an objective? These tasks could include, but are not limited to, building benchwork, laying track, installing the electrical control system, adding scenery and buildings, creating backdrops, building and weathering rolling stock, and, finally, operating the layout. If necessary, tasks are subdivided until they can be identified as specific courses or clinics. The complete list of tasks from introductory to advanced becomes the curriculum, and individual tasks become a single course or clinic.

For each task, a specific set of skills and knowledge is identified; for example, what are the skills and knowledge needed to build a simple or intermediate kit. Based

on this task list, learning objectives are written. For instance: Upon completion of this clinic, using Decoder Pro, the trainee shall be able to program all the sound functions of the onboard DCC/Sound decoder in their locomotive. This is called an enabling learning objective. There may be several enabling learning objectives for any given clinic. From this needs list, specific training objectives are identified. Prerequisite needs will be identified as enabling objectives. If necessary, these enabling objectives can be incorporated into another course. From the needs list, a lesson plan is developed to present or teach the skill. From the lesson plan, a list of course materials is identified, and the course or clinic is developed. Clinics are intended for presentation to NMRA members and prospective members depending on the event. Following completion of the course, the current Achievement Program already exists to provide evaluation of the student's progress. Clinics will typically be less than one hour.

This sounds complicated, but successful presenters tend to use a similar approach and may not even realize they are working through such a structured process. In fact, the NMRA EduTRAIN® model has been used in a number of presentations at several Regional conventions during 2013 by members who have been working to develop the program. These



presentations have all been very well received by audiences.

Quality and Consistency

One of the major differences between the NMRA EduTRAIN® process and most prior clinics will be some formalization of the process into the finished product. This is necessary to ensure greater consistency between different clinics, a higher level of quality in the finished product, and portability of the clinic for reuse by other presenters. Part of the NMRA EduTRAIN® process will be a review and approval of all potential clinics to be included. This is analogous to the current AP process that relies on specific judging and approval criteria to ensure a consistent, high quality model.

Training the Trainers

Quality and consistency of course materials are only part of the need. It's also necessary to provide for quality and consistency of the course presentation. So, NMRA EduTRAIN® will include a track for teaching presenters to become better and more comfortable at delivering the material.

As courses are developed and approved, they will be added to an online library where they will be available for download and reuse at any NMRA event. Guidelines are being developed with the Achievement Program to provide AP credit to course authors and presenters, and an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) capability is being added to the new NMRA website to allow clinics and clinic materials to be uploaded and downloaded.

Example

Let's look at just one example to see how an NMRA EduTRAIN® clinic for detailing freight cars would work. In this example, the clinic title is also the primary learning objective. Specific objectives within the course would include:

1. Identify the common details found on most freight cars.
2. Identify the common ways to attach detail securely so that it will withstand normal operations.
3. Identify railroad-specific detail.
4. Demonstrate how to carve molded-on detail off a model freight car.
5. Demonstrate how to drill holes for installing detail.
6. Demonstrate how to remove factory lettering without damaging the painted surface.
7. Demonstrate how to change out and upgrade couplers.
8. Verify coupler height and workability.
9. Demonstrate how to perform paint touch up.
10. Apply weathering.

The clinic would need to address all ten of these objectives. The course "package" would include a brief course description. For example, with the above objectives would be this course description:

Detailing Model Freight Cars Clinic Description

This clinic is for modelers who are already familiar with model freight car basics such as assembly of typical "shake-the-box" kits. They will learn how to take their model freight cars to the next level by learning the

accompanying clinic objectives (above). Required tools and materials include:

- Hobby knife with a No. 11 blade and a curved blade
- Pin vise or Dremel-type drill
- CA cement or equivalent
- Assorted hobby screwdrivers
- Decals or dry transfers
- Paints
- Paint brushes
- Cotton swabs
- Small diagonal cutters
- Tweezers
- Weathering chalks or paints

This example shows that NMRA EduTRAIN® is not substantially different than previous training clinics, but provides a more methodical way of delivering the content to ensure consistency and quality.

So what is an NMRA EduTRAIN® clinic?

In one word: FOCUS. While most current clinics are based on the presenter's point of view, an NMRA EduTRAIN® clinic is focused on particular learning objectives that are, in turn, based on the Systematic Approach to Training (SAT) methodology described earlier.

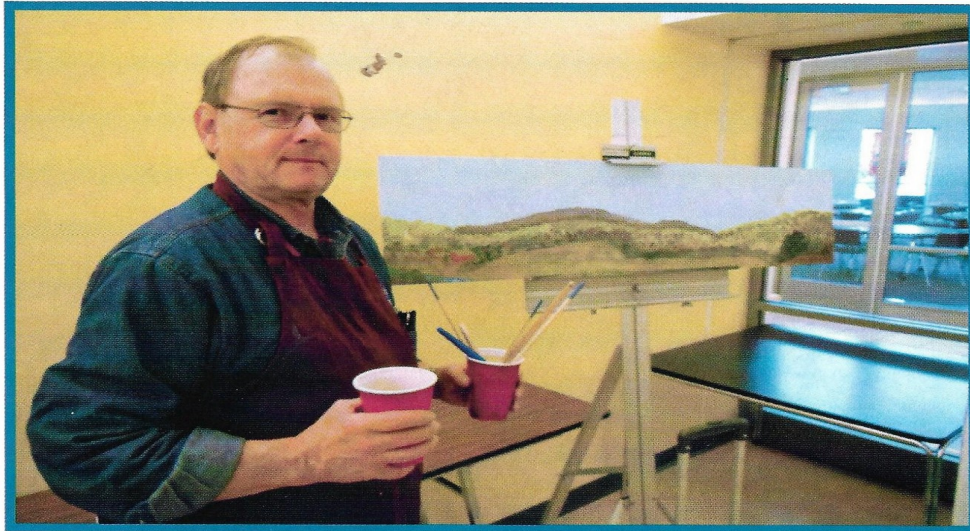
Another very important difference between a typical clinic and an NMRA EduTRAIN® clinic is this: typical clinics are focused on the subject being presented. An NMRA EduTRAIN® clinic focuses on you, the modeler. NMRA EduTRAIN® clinics are "learner centered." It's all about you. As an example of this difference, a clinic based on How I Modeled Anycity, USA would not be a good candidate, but one based on How to Create a Layout Design Element based on Anycity, USA would be a much better candidate. The difference is in the focus: the first clinic explains what the author did, but the second clinic specifically teaches you how to do it.

Approval Process

A committee of reviewers, or Board of Education, consisting of a small number of people, is being formed to review and approve initial submissions. As more people gain experience with NMRA EduTRAIN®, this approval process will migrate to the Regional level, and the Board of Education will provide oversight to ensure ongoing quality and consistency. In this way, we expect the clinic approval process to work similarly to the current AP process. Once a clinic has been approved, it will be uploaded to an FTP site on the new NMRA web site.

2014 March

Now Arriving on Track 1, EduTRAIN! Cont.



NMRA EduTRAIN® is not being developed in a vacuum. We recognize that there are already alternatives available from hobby publishers and online clinics. We intend to consider these alternatives as we move forward. However, we strongly believe that there is a large body of knowledge within the NMRA and talent to produce a rich curriculum of offerings to promote the organization and attract new members. Once again, NMRA EduTRAIN® is not intended to make existing clinics obsolete. It will take some time to establish a complete curriculum of approved NMRA EduTRAIN® clinics, so if you have a clinic that works well today, you should plan to continue using it. However, if you have a clinic that teaches specific knowledge or skills, and you are willing to consider some possible rework to meet the EduTRAIN® standards, please consider submitting your material for consideration by following the instructions in the sidebar.

Plans are underway to provide more information about NMRA at the National and a number of Regional conventions in 2014. Watch for an NMRA EduTRAIN® clinic near you. 🗣️

Open Call for NMRA EduTRAIN® Submissions

This is an open call for candidates for the NMRA EduTRAIN® curriculum. A quick review of programs from several recent National conventions shows many potential candidates. We are interested in clinics at all levels from beginner to advanced. Candidates should be submitted to:

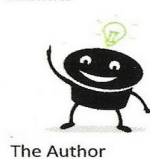
NMRA EduTRAIN®
12136 Tower Hill Road
Sawyer, MI 49125

Submit a copy of the presentation in PowerPoint on a CD or a detailed outline of the clinic with a learning objective.



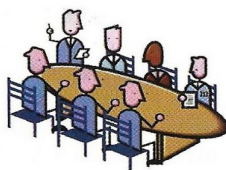
The NMRA *EduTRAIN*® Process

Modeler creates presentation or course outline and submits



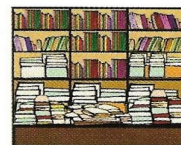
The Author

Feedback and modification (If necessary)



Regional "Board of Education" member reviews

Approval – New course is added to curriculum



Regions or Divisions download and use



2014 March

Jim Reardon earned Master Model Railroader 519.

2014 Apr. Pres. Column includes A Potential for a Europe Region

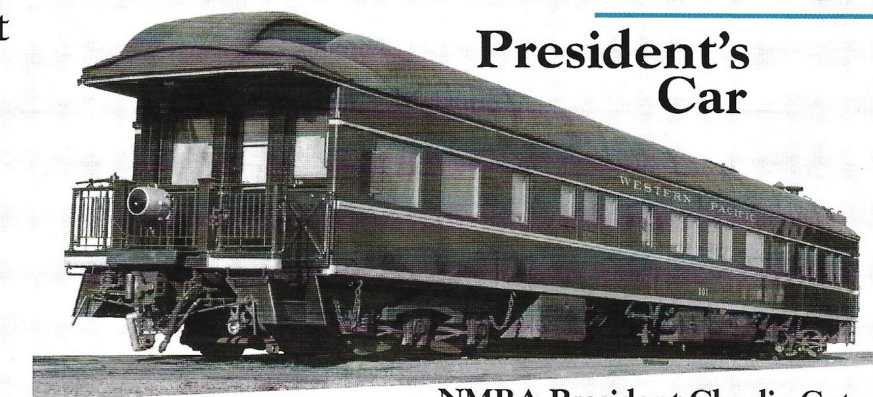
Midyear BOD Report

We recently completed our mid-year meeting, and in this column, I would like to informally report on what came from the meeting. Of course, please understand this report is not official and the minutes of the meeting, which will be published shortly, are the official record. Conducting a meeting as busy as this one is also not conducive to accurate note taking, but with those limitations in mind, I would like to update you on the many important items we addressed.

Our volunteers, and those who help on any level, are our most important assets. Change due to personal commitments is not unusual. So it was at this meeting. Page Martin, our first Director of Marketing, announced he cannot continue in the post but wants to stay involved. He introduced us to John Parrish, with an impressive background in marketing, as his replacement, and I have named John Director of Marketing. The good news is that Page will continue as a Vice President of Marketing. Now that is not to be confused with "NMRA Vice-President" but is a title that assists in getting your card past the receptionist. Page set a very high standard for this post and received a well-deserved President's Award in Atlanta.

Clark Kooning, our Nominations Chair, also cannot continue in the post as he is contemplating a run for office. Stephen Priest has graciously accepted temporary assignment of the post, but we do need a new volunteer who can take over and has a good network of contacts. "Nominations" is an important job and encouraging that next generation of leadership is very important, though often sadly neglected. If you know of someone, please contact me.

The RAC group elected Steve August, who replaces Stephen Priest, but this is not Stephen's last BOD meeting. The BOD finds it very useful to have the magazine editor at the BOD meetings, so Stephen Priest is not off the hook. If the name is familiar, besides editing the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, Stephen does a zillion other things for the NMRA outside the RAC position, such as digitizing photos and documents



President's Car

NMRA President Charlie Getz

for the Diamond Club, working with the NMRANet group, and building the Build A Memory demo layout, to name but just a recent few. He will be sorely missed and was a superb member of the BOD. (I will discuss the RAC concept later in this column.) Wife Cinthia continues as *NMRA MAGAZINE* ad manager and is working on her MMR. Son Joel was the youngest to earn one, and Dad has his so...

Stephen Priest also gave the Board an impressive presentation promoting Kansas City as the location for the 2018 convention. The Board enthusiastically approved the site, and so we are going to Kansas City, as the song suggests.

I also announced the appointment of Bob Ferguson of PCR to head up a new member retention initiative. Bob will be looking to create and share a program of proven retention actions that can be undertaken by Divisions and Regions. We have good success in signing up new members. Our Railpass conversion rate to regular membership is more than 60 percent. However, we lose far too many members at renewal. Some did not see the value, and some complained they were never contacted or made to feel welcome. If we retained 80 to 90 percent of each year's crop of new members, we would grow exponentially. Bob has extensive experience in membership matters, and I expect great things from him.

Our financial position is excellent, and I can recall a time not that long ago when such was not the situation. CFO Frank

Koch and CAO Jenny Hendricks deserve the lion's share of credit for this. We ended 2013 with a surplus in excess of \$240,000. Now, that does not mean dues go down or the letters asking for money stop! It does mean that a promise to fully fund the Life member account is essentially fulfilled and that we have a healthy contingency fund for unexpected occurrences. We are not "flush," but we are healthy. Headquarters sold for almost \$900,000, which was more than the comps in the area, more than the appraisal, and without realtor commission. The Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum got a "deal" as it does not have to build a million-dollar-plus building, and we moved to excellent space where our collections are protected, our staff is secure, and our operating costs are actually less than at Cromwell Road. Again, the proceeds are not used for operating expenses, but to put us in a stable financial position as we move forward. Under Frank Koch, our investments grew by \$20,000 in the year, and we retained more members than we expected. Well done, all.

Perhaps the most significant action taken in a meeting of many, was provisional recognition of a new Region, the first new Region I believe since the Australasian Region. The new Europe Region was already anticipated as sharp-eyed readers of last month's magazine may have noticed in the AP column. This new Region is approved subject to verification and production of the petitions from the forming members. Already at approximately 104

2014 Apr. Pres. Column includes A Potential for a Europe Region

members, the potential for this new Region is very exciting. Europe is a dynamic modeling area with very active groups and a lot of talent. Former Atlantic District Director Nobby Clarke and current Atlantic District Director Kathy Millatt brought the welcome news to the BOD. If you have any doubt as to the modeling capability of these new potential Region members, look at the work of Pelle Soerborg and the Hamburg model railroad display that seems to be a perennial YouTube favorite! Let us not forget Faller, Kibri, Preiser, Noch, Merten, Vollmer, Rivarossi, Lenz, and all the other manufacturers who produce items we all use. The NMRA truly is an international organization, and we value our overseas and Canadian members every much as we do our "stateside" ones. Truly, there are no boundaries in model railroading, so welcome Europe Region.

We were asked by a contingency of L-Gauge (i.e. Lego® trains) enthusiasts to adopt a standard for L-Gauge. The BOD agreed that L-Gauge, as its fans call it, is an exciting pathway to scale model railroading and a real asset at the National Train Show and other train shows. Youngsters especially are enthralled, and the skill involved can be amazing. We hope to see an enhanced presence of L-gauge in the NMRA as a Special Interest Group (SIG). As for adopting an L-gauge standard, we could not. The request could not be honored because we do not control the standard already established and patented by the major maker of L-gauge trains. In other words, there is nothing to set. When the NMRA sets a standard, it is available for any manufacturer to use, but where the sole standard is someone else's and patented, it is not available for use without permission from the patent holder. Hence, there is nothing for the NMRA to do. We have not adopted a standard in such a case without the right for free use of it. So the NMRA could not act upon the request from the L-gauge community.

Clark Kooning presented some wonderful ideas about podcasts, videos, and other media that might improve not only our communications but also educational efforts. He will be preparing some test in-

structional videos this year with hopes of many more in the future. Imagine going to the web site and, for members, being able to "attend" clinics. Imagine access to research materials and conversations with other members on common issues. The eBulletin under VP Gerry Leone and Info-Blast under Director of Support Services Tom Draper are successes. We are always on the lookout for ways to improve our communication and education. For example, we are looking at ways Regions and Divisions can better stay in touch with National and each other. We have some ideas in that regard, so stay tuned.

Some of you read in the last issue about the EduTRAIN program to provide assistance in presenting clinics. IT Department head Ben Sevier is revamping our web presence in exciting ways that will make the NMRA site more user-friendly and provide greater content for our members. With his help and that of Page Martin and Gerry Leone, I held a "town meeting" electronically during the BOD meeting, answering numerous questions from members. A lot is happening, and the NMRA is so fortunate to have such talented help in this area. We could use a volunteer to act as a video manager to work with Ben, and I hope to announce one soon.

Another success is Marketing and the Build a Memory campaign. Indeed, it is so successful that we had to ratchet it back with a better understanding of what to improve for this year. Details to follow. There are a lot of other exciting member benefits in the works, but mum's the word for now.

Not all was roses and light. The Gallery Exhibit and Library move have been slow to progress due to the required legal paperwork working its way through the State of California bureaucracy. There is every indication both projects are a "go," but it is frustrating to wait for events to catch up. If you have not pledged or sent your contribution, please do so. This will happen. We also are fixing our alias mail box addresses after encountering some problems with delivery.

The RAC or Regional Advisory Council was extensively discussed because it never has lived up to its potential. The

2014 Apr. Pres. Column includes A Potential for a Europe Region

RAC Director is elected by the RAC, which consists of all Region presidents or their designees. The election was held with some communication glitches, and as mentioned, Steve August was elected and will continue to bring Regional concerns and issues to the Board, as did his predecessors. The BOD believes that RAC can work; some Regions are not even aware of its existence. We will establish a new moderated group for RAC members to stay in touch with each other and National. Better communication at all levels of the organization helps us all.

We also hope to provide estate assistance advice and create annuities as an important funding tool. We will propose some ideas to give greater flexibility to members as to their Division preference. We hope to provide tools to assist Regions in overseeing Divisions. Divisions are vital to this organization, and I plan to devote a column to that topic soon.

Vertical integration, the legal creation of a single tax-exempt (U.S.) National organization with many independent Regions and Divisions all sharing our tax status, is a desired goal for the entire NMRA. We are at the mercy of the U.S. IRS as our paperwork wends its way through the process. The numerous advantages have been discussed before. Each Region/Division controls its programs and funds but gains tax advantages for contributions and in some cases, taxes paid. In recent years, the IRS has increasingly treated model railroad groups or clubs as 501(c)7 social organizations instead of 501(c)3 not-for-profit educational organizations. The latter have tax advantages for U.S. members. We are confident that we will obtain this status for all Regions and Divisions. If tried separately, it is doubtful such status would be granted. Again, stay tuned!

The BOD ratified the Self-certification program for Standards conformance as proposed by NMRA Standards and Conformance Department manager Di Voss. This is an exciting new development to speed the ability of manufacturers to obtain and advertise conformance warrants. Interestingly, I recently bought a pristine

1940-era Walthers HO boxcar kit at a hobby shop for the Museum. Printed on the box lid, "This product conforms to all NMRA Standards"!! 1940 – 45. I would like to see that time again where manufacturers proudly announce their products meet NMRA Standards and are thus worthy of your hard-earned dollars.

Di also will examine our Recommended Practice on motor voltage, 12-16v, in the context of creating a new standard for the same for DCC and the exciting new battery-power technology or "Power on Board," also called the "Dead Rail Society." As with the prototype, the power comes from a source on board, and radio-controlled DCC provides the control. We are trying to remain ahead of the technological curve. NMRANet is expected to be rolled out at Cleveland after extensive testing. Using the CanBus technology in use in your car, think of this as "DCC" for your layout, controlling turnouts, signals, lighting, and accessories.

The last day of our busy two-day meeting was devoted to long-range planning. The NMRA 2019 committee chaired by Western Director Jack Hamilton presented its draft plan, which was vigorously debated and will form the basis for goals to be achieved in the years ahead. The committee and all who contributed deserve our thanks for an enormous amount of work.

And what an enormous amount of work the mid-year accomplished! Allow me to share my schedule with you to give you an idea of the work in a mid-year meeting. Margaret and I drove to Las Vegas on Thursday, and Friday I attended staff meetings at 9 and 10AM, 2 and 3:30PM, followed by a BOD caucus from 7-10PM. On Saturday, we started at 8:45AM going with breaks until 6:35PM. Sunday, 8:45AM to 2:30PM. Some returned home Sunday and the rest Monday. This leaves little time for socializing and zero time for sightseeing. No complaints, but the 30 or so attendees diligently worked long hours to accomplish

quite a lot. Watch for the official minutes, and feel free to write with any questions or observations. We love to hear from you.

Finally, have you registered for Cleveland yet and the NMRA 2014 convention? This will be one not to miss with some spectacular tours and clinics planned. Hotels are already filling up, as are the more popular tours, so if you have not yet registered, do not wait too long. I look forward to seeing you there. Look for distinctive name tags and events to identify Directors and Officers. We want to speak with you and hear what you have to say.

Those are my thoughts — what are yours?



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SOUNDTRAXX



Old Town

by

Jim Gore earned Master Model Railroader 525.

Gregory Wright earned Master Model Railroader 520.

2014 May

In the President's Column it was mentioned that some are suggesting a name change to: **International Model Railroad Organization. The President wrote that while some favor it, others don't. This topic came up in in the Mid-1940s as we had already become much more than just a national organization.**

Alain Kap earned Master Model Railroader 526.

Don Fowler earned Master Model Railroader 518.

Robert Robbins earned Master Model Railroader 527.

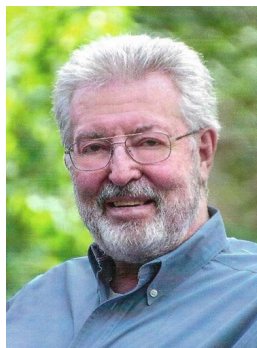
2014 June

Bob Reid earned Master Model Railroader 534.

2014 July

John MacGown earned Master Model Railroader 517.

2014 July Ron Morse Picture published in layout article.



Ron Morse, MMR 159, is an outstanding model builder, one of my MMR mentors and a great friend. As a third generation Colorado native, he was raised in the Rocky Mountains in the Central City & Black Hawk, Colorado, area. In 1984, Ron and his family were transferred to the Kansas City area. They currently reside in Lenexa, Kansas. He retired from Corporate Express after 30 years, where he was the Plant Manager of their National Graphic Arts Center. He is an accomplished artist, who started sketching and oil painting of mountain scenery and ghost towns as a junior in high school.

2014 July

The Official NMRA Region, Division, or 100% Club Banner Is Still Available

By Gerry Leone, MMR
NMRA Vice-President / Special Projects

Back in December 2012, we announced the availability of a special banner that Regions, Divisions, or 100% Clubs can use at train shows. We've had numerous requests to publish that information again.

The NMRA has a professionally designed, full-color, self-standing banner that you can order with your own logo and name on it for approximately \$235 plus shipping. The banner is roughly 80 inches tall by 33 inches wide, and is printed on sturdy vinyl (indoor use only). It features the NMRA logo, along with two attention-getting shots of model railroads, a finished model structure, and two members having some fun assembling models. And, of course, your Region, Division, or 100% Club name will appear in the center.

The banner itself is self-contained and rolls up into its own metal base like a window shade. When it's time to set it up, it's as easy as inserting the two supplied poles into the base and unrolling it. The full banner kit also comes with a convenient carrying case.

Here's how to order: Camelback Displays, who works with the NMRA, is the printer for the banner and has our "master artwork" in-hand. To order a banner, you need to contact Camelback Displays by calling them toll-free at 1-877-268-7469 or visiting their website at www.camelback-displays.com. Any one of their representatives can handle your request — you don't need to speak with a specific person. Just mention the NMRA, and they'll know who you are. (Please note: NMRA Headquarters isn't handling these orders, so please don't contact them with requests or questions. E-mail Camelback.)

Camelback will need a high-resolution copy of your logo if you want it to appear on your banner. The maximum space for your logo is 10x10 inches. Since the banner is printed at 150 dots per inch (dpi), your electronic artwork needs to be either 10x10 inches at 150dpi, 5x5 inches at 300dpi, or an EPS file (vector graphics). Any logo that's smaller than those sizes will not print clearly. If you have artwork for

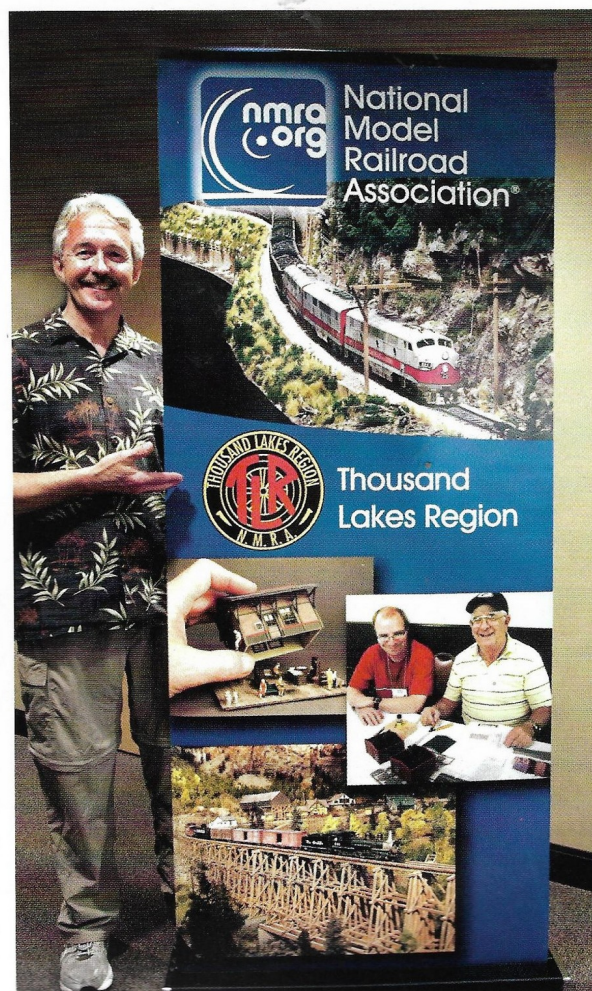
your Region, Division, or 100% Club but need to have it redrawn to those sizes, Camelback will provide those services for a fee. Please contact a Camelback rep with questions about this. If you don't have a logo, you can have your Division/Region/100% Club name set in type. Or if your logo plainly states your Division/Region/100% Club name, you can have it put on the banner without having any type set.

Because the NMRA is trying to maintain a standard, consistent look to our banners, and because it's most efficient for our printer, the only area on the banner you can change is the Region/Division/100% Club logo area. All other graphics must remain as you see them in the photo. You can't add logos or type to any other area except that 10-inch high by full-width area in the center of the banner.

The workflow progresses this way: You contact a rep at Camelback, telling them you're interested in an NMRA Region/Division/Club banner. The rep will give you an email address to which you can send your logo artwork. They'll check it to make sure it meets the minimum graphic standards. Include your Region, Division, or 100% Club name as you want it to appear on the banner. Also include the address to which the banner will be shipped.

Within a week or so, you'll be emailed a quote that includes the printing and shipping costs, and any additional graphics costs for resizing or redrawing your logo. You'll then email back, accepting the quote.

At this point, you also need to pay Camelback, because they won't print any banner without having payment in-hand first. You can arrange to pay them with credit card or check — it's up to you to work out



the payment details with the rep. However, no further work will be done on your banner until Camelback receives your payment.

In a few weeks, you'll be emailed a PDF version of your banner for you to proof. At this point, be sure everything is spelled correctly and is located in the proper place. If the PDF proof looks good, check the "OK, proof correct/ready to print" box on the form they'll send you, sign the form, and return it to Camelback. Additionally, if you don't want to receive a printed proof (printed proofs cost extra), check the "I elect not to receive a printed hard copy proof" box on the form.

That's it. Within several weeks, your finished banner will be delivered to the address you specified. You'll have a great-looking banner that doesn't take up much space, but will attract a lot of attention. So why wait? Make your Region, Division, or 100% Club look great with a free-standing, eye-catching banner! 🚂

2014 July

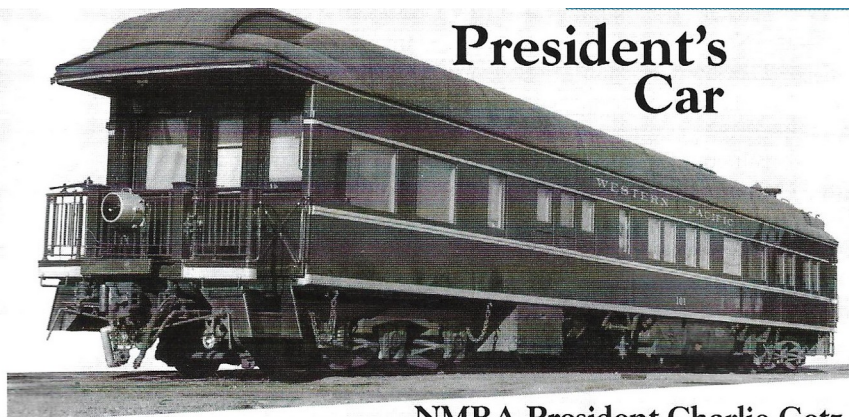
The Members react — again!

So far, during my first term as your president, we have sold the headquarters building and made significant progress in establishing a Gallery Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum and in moving the Kalmbach Memorial Library collection to the CSRM for administration by them. Some of those actions were controversial; yet, I received only a handful of comments critical of those decisions. However, mention that I personally am not a fan of operations in model railroading, and you would think I had suggested model railroading is an unworthy activity that should be avoided at all costs! That is, of course, not what I said or intended. Let me quote from my editorial printed in the May issue. "I have nothing against operations. To the contrary, it is fascinating in principle." My confession that I did not personally "get" operations was perceived by some as an insult to all those who do operate. If that was your reading, I apologize — that was neither my intent nor represents a fair reading of my comments.

In truth, I appreciate operations, and member reactions were not all negative. A number of you wrote to advise that you also were not interested in operations but appreciated the major contribution that this segment of our hobby makes. My friends who are avid operators even invited me to reconsider this aspect of our fascinating hobby and I have promised to do so. They also wondered as to my motive in writing such a "meaningless" column that serves no purpose. With that characterization, I disagree.

If you recall, the column started with a definition of what constitutes "model railroading," from a discussion that arose during the Board of Directors' midyear meeting last February. The board debated whether to "expand" the definition of model railroading to encompass activities that are viewed by some as outside the scope of the NMRA. It was a lively and constructive debate. I decided to expand on that debate with a short discussion of the many facets of model railroading and how some embrace those facets while others disdain them. The theme was really tolerance of those who do not practice

President's Car



NMRA President Charlie Getz

model railroading as you may. Using myself as an example, I mentioned that operations were not a facet of model railroading in which I was personally interested. For that, some said the President of the NMRA must embrace all aspects of model railroading — a point that does have merit and pummeled me in chat rooms. Embrace and accept is one thing; practice and perform is another. My column clearly embraces operations as an important part of this hobby, and I will continue to support operations. I recognize how valuable it is and that operations can become a force in its own right. However, the column served a very important purpose: it got you thinking, and it got many of you to respond. Bravo! It also demonstrated the point of the column. If one does not accept what you believe is the essence of the hobby, look out! The message should be ... what a great hobby that has so many different aspects.

I would like to share a couple of responses with you simply because they are thoughtful and raise valid issues. A number of members either wrote that they did not operate and saw no value in doing so, but even more advised that their style of operations differs from Tony Koester's, which seems to work for them. One member wrote, "The operation that we have allows us to work out little puzzles every Friday night ...and enjoy the railroad and each other's company. No tight schedules or timetables: we just run trains." Others stated they did not use CTC boards or phone communication systems but just ran the trains subject to a timetable and tried to complete their switching moves in

the time allotted. Frankly, that is the kind of operation I can foresee myself enjoying in the future. One of the better letters received came from Steve Benezra, editor of the *Dispatchers Office*, which is the newsletter of the Operations Special Interest Group or "OPSIG." With his permission, I would like to quote that letter.

"When I read your President's Car column in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*, I quickly turned to the front cover to check the month. I thought it was the April issue and your column was an April fool's joke. To my surprise, it was the May issue. So then my thoughts went to 'Charlie is not getting much mail these days' or 'he wants to see how much e-mail he can get before his computer crashes' or 'perhaps he wants to be in Guinness Book of Records for the most e-mail received in a 24-hour period.' In other words, there must be some rational reason you had for your comments about model railroad operations and those of us who enjoy either attending and/or hosting op sessions. Many of us spend years building our model railroad empires. But the real enjoyment for the owner comes when a bunch of friends get together and have an op session on the railroad. Judging from your comments, you haven't experienced the joy and satisfaction from watching your friends, and sometimes guests, bring your railroad to life. I have heard model railroaders call their work kinetic art and the height of that art is emulating a transportation system.

"When I hosted the first op session on my railroad, all that I had planned, dreamed, and hoped for came together during the three-hour op session. Yes, there were some

problems that were unanticipated because I had never turned eight model railroaders loose on my railroad. Over the subsequent months, the problems were corrected, and the fun my operating crew had increased. But these op sessions are more than just running trains. Once a month, friends get together, "play trains," laugh, tell stories, and forget about the problems of world and their lives for a brief period of time. I would worry if I didn't hear laughter coming from the layout room, but that has never happened. Many of my crew don't have or have never built a model railroad layout but they enjoy running my railroad...I am not part of the Railroad Prototype Modeler (RPM) group. I don't wish to spend the time modeling motive power and rolling stock at that level of detail and realism, but I will not insult their efforts or motives for undertaking what they enjoy doing.

"You, as President of the NMRA, should encourage all aspects of model railroading whether you enjoy a particular activity or not. I have signed you up for a year's membership in the OPSIG and you will receive our quarterly publication, *The Dispatcher's Office* by e-mail. If you are ever in the central North Carolina area, give me some advance notice and I will arrange to have you attend an op session on my railroad. Perhaps I can get you 'hooked.'"

This very thoughtful letter raises valid points. As a bonus, I become a member of OPSIG, and I promise to study their newsletter religiously and, as time allows, give operations a second look.

The second topic that I will briefly discuss arose from an eBulletin piece I wrote on Millennials. Our former Vice President of Special Operations, Bill Kaufman often urges us to attract the younger generation to the NMRA and to our hobby. Bill has long advocated making a major push to attract the Millennials — the generation born around the turn of this century — to our hobby and ultimately to the NMRA. One cannot argue with the concept of the need to infuse new blood into our hobby and our organization. I believe the average age of an NMRA member is 63, and the average age of our life members is 67. Although that age does not increase in a linear fashion,

that is the average member age does not rise one year with each succeeding year, we are facing a critical mass in the near future if we continue to age without decreasing our average. Years ago, I used to joke in speeches that I had plotted the increase in age and determined that model railroading would die on Wednesday, April 15, 2037. Fiction, but it does make a point. If there is no change, eventually our members will no longer be able to carry on in this fascinating hobby.

I would love to reach the next generation and attract young members, but there is a difference of opinion on the wisdom of whether reaching out to the Millennial generation is worth the extreme effort it would take. And please note, despite claims to the contrary, those of us who are in the boomer generation are not all old fuddy-duddies stuck in the past. Nor are we as comfortable with the digital world as are the Millennials, who were raised in that world and frankly know nothing else. Study after study has shown that this generation indeed differs from previous generations, even Generation X, which is the generation now hitting its middle age. That generation is less interested in model railroading but does not feature many of the same characteristics of the Millennial generation.

These studies have shown that the Millennials are engrossed in the digital, instant gratification lifestyle that does not encourage the joining of organizations nor delayed gratification. Model railroading is a tactile pursuit, largely analog (except for DCC) and with extreme delayed gratification. How long does a layout take to build? None of that appeals to Millennials, according to the studies.

There was even a story in major newspapers about the future of golf and how the PGA is growing concerned that those participating in the sport are aging without a new generation coming in behind. It turns out golf is complex, difficult to master, and has many rules. In addition, Millennials do not like to join organizations like the PGA. They don't value meetings or organizations that do not touch on their particular interests.

Add to this rather bleak outlook, a lack of building or model building experience

as a child and total immersion in a digital world, and the ability to reach Millennials is questionable. Some claim that the problem is not with the Millennials but that trains are no longer visible to American society and, therefore, model trains are not of interest. I reject that theory. When I was growing up in the 1950s and early 1960s, trains were certainly not the focus in society. Rockets and NASA were the bright and shining new toys. Yet, model railroading hit its peak in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

So how does one attract a generation heavily embedded in the digital world that believes all answers can be found on the Internet for free and that organizations are not worth joining? I do not have an easy answer. I wish I did, for these are good people — our grandkids and the ones who patiently help me master my new iPad Air. I also do not believe that

the end of model railroading as we know it is on the horizon. In the late 1950s, the rise of easy to assemble plastic kits was seen as dooming the hobby and craftsmanship. We realize now that these fears were unfounded. Perhaps the Millennials will not be the generation that reinvigorates model railroading; however, their children may do so. One truth of life is that each generation tends to reject the excesses of the previous. The digitally engrossed generation of Millennial parents may not be the best models for their children and ironically, those children may be more interested in the tactile pleasures of model railroading. And the Millennial's children are fascinated with Thomas, Brio, and Lego trains. If you come to the NMRA convention in Cleveland and attend the National Train Show, you will see the looks on those children's faces at the impressive Lego train exhibit. You will see

them fascinated by trains wherever they look. In short, you'll see the future of our hobby.

I would love to hear your thoughts about how we can attract a younger generation. Until then, we will continue to concentrate on the Boomer generation, recognizing it is not a long-term fix but is the generation with the time, resources, and interest to enjoy a hobby. We will continue to outreach to Gen-X, Millennials, and the post-Millennial generation because we know this is a wonderful hobby

Well, those are my thoughts — what are yours?

Charlie

2014 August

United We Stand

Unity, not necessarily uniformity. I recently heard these words describing "community," and they began to resound within me. As a very diverse hobby association encompassing different scales, eras, locales, railroads, and so forth, we often struggle with the paradigm of what model railroading is and should be. We often, erroneously, think that our way is the only way.

Websters' Dictionary defines unity as the state of being united or joined as a whole, especially in a political context; harmony or agreement between people or groups; the state of forming a complete and pleasing whole; a thing forming a complex whole. As a group, we will be far more successful if we tap our greatest resource: the intentional and interdependent connection of like-minded others for mutual support and fellowship. Model railroading is a hobby of activity, and the NMRA plays a key part in the discovery, development, and deployment of our hobby through various programs and Standards. Had the membership not flexed its united muscle when developing Standards, interoperability among various manufacturers of rolling stock would not be possible.

Discovery, development, and deployment of our skills and knowledge is key to our becoming better modelers. Clinics, articles, and personal involvement in model railroad groups all play a role in our knowledge and growth. Each of us has a skillset and a unique gift-mix that can be used for our enjoyment and the edification of

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



others.

Adopting the idea of unity opens the door for other modelers to teach you, to work on your railroad, and in the process create a much better model railroad. Surround yourself with those on the same mission as you — not just modelers who model the exact thing you do. If you cannot paint a backdrop, I will bet there is a clinic or individual that can teach you how to paint one. That person will enjoy using their skill, and you will benefit from learning a new technique. True growth in the hobby will make it more enjoyable and allow you to achieve more in the long run.

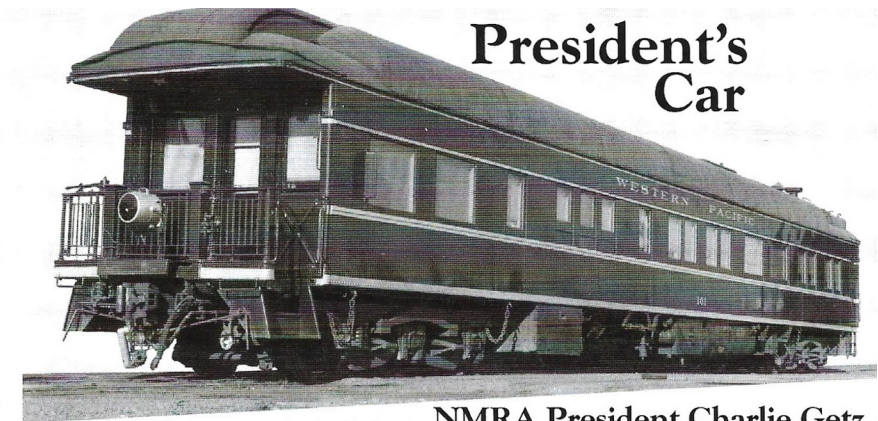
Stephen M. Priest

What is the NMRA?

We recently completed the annual membership meeting and BOD meeting, but deadlines are such that this is written prior to those events. So look elsewhere for an initial report, and I hope to add more next month. I do want to announce the resignation due to work commitments of At Large North America Director Mike Yurcec and appointment of past NMRA President Allen Pollock as interim replacement. Allen can effectively operate starting Day One and has no interest in running for the position. He is a true interim appointment but one with a breadth of experience. We are fortunate that Allen stepped forward and that we have such qualified candidates for the upcoming election. Thanks to Nominations Chair Tony Koester for doing a great job in seeking qualified candidates for office. We need more, and we need new faces to bring fresh ideas forward. Please consider volunteering and give back to the hobby that has given you so much. End of commercial.

The most common question asked by members of the NMRA or prospective members is: "What do I get for my membership dues?" The second most common question is: "What is the NMRA?" It is not a stupid question. There is sometime confusion, even among veteran NMRA members, as to the exact nature of our association. Occasionally, at the Board of Director level, we even debate that question as we contemplate the NMRA's future. For example, the BOD recently discussed whether we are a "scale" model railroad association or whether we should "broaden" our appeal by dropping reference to "scale." In my opinion, we are and always have been a "scale" model railroad group in the sense that our programs and focus is on scale model railroading, not tinplate or toy trains. There are other excellent groups that focus on those areas.

What we are is not a simple answer. On paper, the NMRA is a not-for-profit corporation promoting education and information about scale model railroading.



NMRA President Charlie Getz

However, the NMRA is far more than that. We are also the world's oldest and largest association devoted to scale model railroading. We are, to my knowledge, the only association with a history of promulgating standards — standards that have been accepted worldwide. While some might gripe about those standards and some occasionally rebel or ignore those standards, they do so at their peril. For no other group has the credibility, history, and effectiveness of this organization in setting standards and having those standards respected by industry. We do not set standards out of hubris or over the strong objections of industry. Rather, the NMRA partners with industry where it can, and where it cannot, the NMRA establishes standards that are in the best interests of the hobby. Most manufacturers eventually agree that compliance with NMRA Standards insures inter-operability and is best for the hobby and its consumers. For those who stubbornly refuse, we need to remind the consuming hobby that these standards stand between them and chaos. For that is why the NMRA was founded in 1935. And for those who claim that standards are passé, let them look no farther than the computer industry or the cell phone industry. Try charging your Samsung Galaxy cell phone with an Apple charger. That is what DCC might have looked like had there been no NMRA.

Beyond that, the NMRA is also a social organization, which of course is the most difficult aspect of our mission to define and explain. Very few people join the NMRA expecting to meet good friends. Yet veteran

NMRA members almost always cite the friends they make within our association as one of the great benefits of membership. This is one of the hardest benefits, however, to explain to a non-member, and most non-members would be understandably reluctant to accept this "benefit" at face value.

The NMRA is also the only association that can create the Achievement Program and deem certain qualified modelers as "Master Model Railroaders" with a straight face. This MMR title has meaning and is widely accepted in the hobby. No other group can or has done this, and in our 50-plus years of the Achievement Program, we have only generated slightly more than 500 Master Model Railroaders. Anyone who has achieved that lofty status can attest that it is a test of skill and perseverance, as well as a rewarding experience.

What is the NMRA? It is all these things and far more. I have not even mentioned the educational purposes, which is one of the primary reasons for our existence. We offer the opportunity to learn how to become and be a better modeler. Whether it is clinics at National, a Region, or a local Division meet; whether it is through our library or through the digital archive, there are ample opportunities to improve your skills. We also reach out to the public, often in conjunction with partners, to illustrate why scale model railroading is a wonderful hobby. We also work with our brothers and sisters in the tinplate and toy train hobby, or in other fields of the broadest definition of model railroading — even if they do not fall within the NMRA's mission statement —

to advance the hobby of model railroading wherever we can.

We do all of this with the support and help of more than 18,000 members. The NMRA does face challenges, as does the hobby itself. The number of model railroaders is slowly shrinking, as is our membership. Although ironically, growth is occurring in the hobby, it is occurring in countries where the hobby was historically unknown. The European Region, recently formed, certainly has a history of model railroading and some extremely talented modelers. However, China and Singapore do not. Yet there is an active group in China, which seeks the NMRA's guidance in defining and learning about the hobby. Recently, I was contacted by a group in Singapore who wish to affiliate with the NMRA, and I will be meeting with them in October since fortuitously, I will be in Singapore on private business. The challenges of a shrinking hobby face us, but so do the opportunities of a growing hobby in places where hobbies are a recent development.

Other challenges the NMRA faces lie in the area of benefits we offer that can be enjoyed without joining the NMRA. The obvious example is Standards. When we set standards, we do so for the entire hobby, not just NMRA members. We offer our standards gauges to all, though our members receive a discount. Thus, some model railroaders see no reason to join. Sadly, model railroaders can be very self-involved and not support us because they do not see the value to themselves in doing so. If you love model railroading, you should join if only because it is the best way to support the hobby. Buying that new product helps the manufacturer and the hobby industry but does not add to the hobby per se. Supporting the NMRA is a vote in favor of the hobby and allows us to continue our work. So why are only approximately 10 percent of serious scale model railroaders members? That question haunts me, though I note the percentage has remained constant over the years. Interestingly, traditionally, only 10 percent of our members attend the

National Convention. I am not sure why 10 percent is so popular a percentage!

Occasionally, I read on NMRA chat group sites comments that if the NMRA were to disappear, clubs could take up the slack. Oh really? Yes, clubs offer social opportunities and some even hold educational clinics. Can clubs set standards? Can clubs designate members as MMR's with acceptance by the community? Can clubs hold conventions or feature world-class clinicians? Clubs are fantastic, and I was once a member of a great club in Palo Alto, California, as a young modeler. However, clubs are basically social organizations bringing together members to build a model railroad and provide operating opportunities, often to those who otherwise have none. They are not the NMRA.

Some also argue that the NMRA should consist of Regions and Divisions only. We all recognize the local level is the most important for that is where the "rubber meets the road." However, National is what defines the NMRA in programs and concept. We have local branches to deliver and administer those programs. This is not to diminish the role of Regions and Divisions but to remind us all that there is one NMRA with international presence. Without "National," there would be in essence 19 NMRA's (for each region). Does that make sense? Again, standards and MMR's? In reality, the NMRA is 80 percent local, and it works well that way.

We need the NMRA as the true international organization that it is, and we are international! We have three overseas regions plus a number of cross-border Canadian regions. We treasure our non-U.S. members. Model railroading truly knows no boundaries. We are not political, and frankly, I am blown away by some of the modeling and modelers from overseas. Despite the name, we truly and uniquely are the International Model Railroad Association. (Sorry, those initials are taken!)

Above all, the NMRA is an organization that deserves support. If you are a serious scale model railroader and even if you do not agree with every program or activity

2014 August

What is the NMRA? Cont.

undertaken by this organization, supporting the NMRA is important — it supports the hobby. When one critic blasted the NMRA for certain aspects of its mission, I asked that critic what “damage” the NMRA had ever done to the hobby of scale model railroading. He could not name anything. In fact, I cannot think of any “damage” or harm done to the hobby because of the NMRA — far from it. So when someone asks you “What is the NMRA?” answer them that it is an association of scale model railroaders that has been in existence for 75-plus years to advance this hobby and to promote and educate people about it; that it desires the respect and sup-

port of every serious model railroader in the world; and, importantly, it is positioned to insure that the hobby can be enjoyed by all who seek it.

For me, that is a daunting mission but one this organization has successfully executed for decades. I hope we will continue to do so.

Well, those are my thoughts — what are yours?

Charlie

2014 August

Dick Roberts earned Master Model Railroader 522.

2014 September Nothing But Praise: NMRA Website

Nothing but Praise

Cleveland's convention marked the end of my term as an elected member of the NMRA Board of Directors. I look back over this three-year term with great admiration for each and every individual with whom I had the pleasure of serving. Having witnessed it first hand, I can assure you that the members of the Board and the National Officers place great concern with the health, operations, and future of the NMRA.

My time on the Board was filled with helping our association become more efficient and meaningful to the membership today while looking forward at the challenges the future may hold. Although we face challenges, we have a proven history of overcoming them. Although not every member agrees with every decision, rest assured that each and every Board member and National office holder performs his or her duties with only the benefit of the organization in mind. As a member, I wouldn't settle for less.

The IT department, headed by Ben Sevier, recently launched the new — and I mean from the ground up new — NMRA Website. For years, the old NMRA website had been patched up, added onto, and bolstered in a manner that just barely kept it operating, current, and functional. Ben and his team have skillfully created a state-of-the-art website that promises to be all that we have dreamed of and more — a monumental task, to say the least.

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



The new and improved website is easy to navigate, brilliantly colored, and works with most mobile devices and tablets. It features interactive pages, a calendar that can be filtered by country, state, and region, and is optimized for super-fast browsing. I would like to thank Ben and his team personally for their hard work over the past three years. I personally have witnessed Ben busily working to implement features, updates, and coding for the site. I believe that the new site helps to launch the NMRA into a new era — one that is full of potential.

Stephen M. Priest

2014 September

AWARDS & HONORS



Above: Monroe and Daisy Stewart recieved a President's award. — Gerry Leone, MMR photo



Above: Ray deBlieck and Ed Slintak received Meritorious Service Awards (left to right) from Bob Amsler. — Gerry Leone, MMR photo



Above: Tom Draper, HLM, recieved a President's award along with his wife Debbie (not present). — Gerry Leone, MMR photo



Above: Clark Kooning, MMR recieved an Honorary Life Member award. — Gerry Leone, MMR photo

Bottom Right: Howard Prunty received a President's Award. — all, Gerry Leone, MMR photos



Frank Koch



Bob Blake



Howard Prunty

Received President's Award from Pres. Charles Getz (right).

2014 September On the Cover of a Magazine!



Frank Koch presented Kathy Millatt her MMR, 542, Certificate.

Kathy is our first lady to serve on the National Board and our 8th lady MMR. Kathy is the lone lady MMR from the British Region.



Right: Contest Chairman Bob Hamm presents the Bachmann Innovations Award to Richard Briggs for his PRR Ore Dock HO-scale diorama (pictured above), selected as this year's most innovative model. — Paul Voelker photos



NMRA Magazine

Contest Chair Bob Hamm (left) Presents Richard Briggs an award for his work on the pictured diorama.

October 2014

Gordon Condon earned Master Model Railroader 537.

2014 November

Nicholas S. Muff, MD earned Master Model Railroader 540.

Andrew Merriam earned Master Model Railroader 533.

2014 December Cinthia Priest 1st Female Editor National Mag.!

Handing Over the Reins

This month marks a major change in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. It is with a great sense of sadness and appreciation that this will be my last issue as editor. After producing 100 issues over the last past 8½ years, I will be handing over the reins to the Assistant Editor, Cinthia Priest.

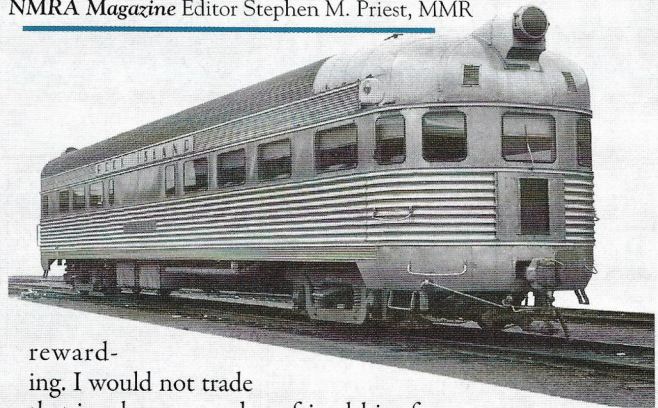
I have immensely enjoyed producing, brainstorming, and editing the *NMRA MAGAZINE* and its predecessor *SCALE RAILS*. I want to thank all of you for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to model, learn, and grow with the NMRA. Working as your editor has contributed greatly to me personally and professionally. I leave this position with many memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life. I consider many of you to be among my closest friends, and that is in part what has made this experience so rewarding. I will truly miss working with such an efficient and competent team of individuals, and I am very proud of what the NMRA has accomplished over the years.

I want to make it known that I am not leaving the NMRA nor do I intend to disassociate my involvement with its activities or members. I will continue to spearhead the LCC (NMRANet) initiative, chair the NMRA 2018 National Convention in Kansas City, and offer my support wherever I can.

In time, I may again run for the Board of Directors, depending on my schedule and the needs of the BOD. Involvement in our association is key and is what has made my tenure with the NMRA so

Observation Car

NMRA Magazine Editor Stephen M. Priest, MMR



reward-
ing. I would not trade
that involvement and my friendships for
the world.

I cannot believe how quickly the time has passed; it seems like only yesterday I was meeting with then-president Mike Brestel and then-publisher Larry DeYoung for the first time. In recent years, we have seen great positive changes in our association. These changes are fueled by dedicated individuals working for the success of the NMRA. I invite all of you to become involved to keep our wonderful hobby entertaining, affordable, and standardized.

Cinthia's Husband had been Editor, and she Assistant, for many years prior to Stephen moving on to new challenges.

2014 December

Gene S. Sing earned Master Model Railroader 544.

Jim Dalberg earned Master Model Railroader 545.

2014 December

Kathy Millatt, MMR 542, 8th lady overall, #1 in the British Region.

